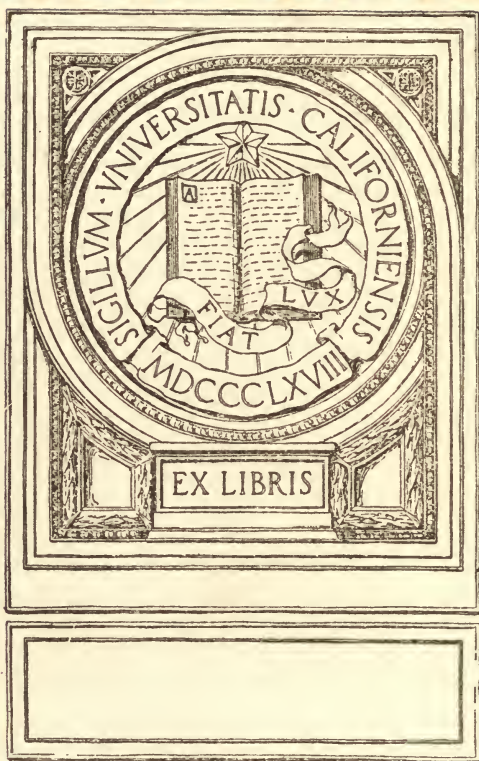


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BASCO NUÑEZ.

THE

# HISTORY OF AMERICA.

BY

THOMAS F. GORDON.

VOLUMES FIRST AND SECOND,

CONTAINING

THE HISTORY OF THE SPANISH DISCOVERIES  
PRIOR TO 1520.

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VOLUME II.

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# HISTORY OF AMERICA.

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## SPANISH DISCOVERIES, &c.

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### CHAPTER I.

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I. It will be recollected, that the first enterprize of Columbus was undertaken for the crown of Castile, and that the new world became a dependency of that kingdom. On the death of Isabella, both, by the natural order of succession, would have passed to Philip, archduke of Austria, and his wife Joanna, the sole surviving child and heiress of Ferdinand and Isabella. But the duke had not the confidence of his mother-in-law, and the imbecility of Joanna rendered her unfit to direct public affairs. Moved by these considerations, Isabella, a few weeks before her death,\* by will, appointed Ferdinand regent, or administrator of Castile, un-

\* 26th November, 1504, at Medina del Campo.



til her grandson, Charles, should attain the age of twenty years. She bequeathed to him, also, one-half of the revenues of the Indies, and the grand-masterships of the three military orders of her kingdom. In return for these favourable dispositions, she required him to swear that he would not, by a second marriage, or otherwise, deprive Joanna, or her posterity, of the right of succession to any of his realms. Immediately on the queen's death, Ferdinand resigned the title of King of Castile, and caused Philip and Joanna to be proclaimed sovereigns of that kingdom; but assumed, at the same time, the character of Regent, which he prevailed upon the Cortes to acknowledge.\*

II. By the death of Isabella, the Indians lost their only protector. The relaxation of the reins of government caused by that event, subjected the island of Hispaniola to the almost uncontrolled authority of Ovando. The regulations mitigating the rigour of Indian servitude were forgotten:—the wages allotted to Indian labourers were withdrawn, and their tasks increased; and the governor, without restraint, distributed them among his friends. In Spain, the courtiers who could obtain no other rewards, solicited grants of Indians, whom, some, emigrating to the island, employed under their own direction, whilst others farmed them out, or governed them by an overseer. This cruel policy, most destructive to the Indian race, produced great immediate profits from the mines. The gold was melted down quarterly, under an officer duly appointed, and amounted annually to the sum of four hundred and sixty thousand pesos. Of this great mass of wealth, a small portion only remained with the original acquirers; most of whom, living

\* 2 Robertson's Charles V. p. 6.

according to their hopes, always beyond their means, were deeply in debt.

The proprietors and workers of the mines scarce ever carried any thing away from the smelting-houses. They were met there by their creditors, who not unfrequently bore off the whole treasure of the debtor, and sent him to prison for an unpaid balance. Indeed, so uncommon was a different fate, that historians have recorded the name of a prudent and pious miner, who, by treating his Indians well, and circumscribing his own desires, was enabled to take home with him the product of his labours in marked ingots.\* But the vast fortunes suddenly acquired by others, drew new adventurers to America, and notwithstanding the mortality occasioned by a change of climate, food, and habits of life, the colony of Hispaniola continued to increase.†

III. The administration of Ovando, so far as regarded the Spaniards, was wise and just. Under his care, towns speedily grew up around the forts, seventeen in number, distributed through every province in the island; and were incorporated by the king. The Europeans who were on the island at the time of his arrival, had appropriated to themselves the female relatives of the Indian chiefs; and by this connexion held more absolute sway over their Indian slaves. At the instance of the clergy, he compelled them to renounce this illicit intercourse, by parting with their paramours, or to conform to Christian morals, by wedding them. The Castilians deemed the latter disgraceful, yet they preferred to submit, rather than lose the power which they exercised in right of these women. But Ovando, jealous of rights which were independent of his authority, exchanged the Indians thus placed

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. l. 6. c. 7.

† Robertson's America.

for others, who were held during his pleasure only. He watched vigilantly over the deportment of the Spaniards, seized such as were turbulent or dissolute, and shipped them for Spain. Thus, by the suppression of all power inconsistent with his own, by rewarding the obedient and removing the worthless, he established the reign of the law, which he administered with promptitude, firmness, and impartiality.\*

IV. The efforts of Ovando were supported by Ferdinand, who, in the daily increase of revenue, found the great value of the discoveries of Columbus. Upon his return to Spain, from his Italian dominions in 1507, he established and enlarged the India House at Seville, adding new offices, and increasing its privileges and immunities. He ordained, that no person should settle in, nor any goods be exported to, America, without permission of that council;—that such permission should be preferably given to married men; and that settlers who had wives in Spain should send for them;—that marriage should be encouraged among the Indians, and among such negro slaves as had been transported to Hispaniola;—that a school should be maintained at his expense in St. Domingo, where the children of the Caciques should be instructed; and that all books sent over should be strictly examined, lest profane or scandalous ones should corrupt the people. He gave a regular form to the ecclesiastical government, the pope having granted authority for erecting an archbishopric, bishoprics, deaneries, parishes, and other spiritual divisions, under the patronage of the king of Spain. And with a wisdom rarely pertaining to a devoted son of the church, he circumscribed the papal power in his new possessions, by reserving to the

\* Herrera.

crown the right to dispose of all benefices in America; stipulating, also, that no papal mandate should be promulgated there, until it had been approved by his council. Tithes were established for the support of the clergy, and adequate means were given for the erection of churches; and to prevent the inroads of heresy, the inquisition extended here its terrible powers.\*

V. The rapid annihilation of the Indian race depriving the colonists of their accustomed instruments of labour, they were unable to extend their improvements, and maintained with difficulty the works they had begun. For remedy of this, Ovando proposed to transport the inhabitants of the Lucayan islands to Hispaniola. This measure, obviously of barbarous inhumanity, and a violation of natural right, was not without a specious justification. The natives of these islands, it was said, would be more easily civilized and instructed in religion, if united to the Spanish colony, and placed under the inspection of its missionaries. The king could not be deceived as to the real motives of this proposition, yet he readily gave it his assent. Vessels were accordingly fitted out for the Lucayos, whose commanders, now acquainted with the Indian language, informed the natives, that they came from a delightful country, in which their ancestors dwelt, for the purpose of conveying them thither, to participate in scenes of never-ending bliss. A belief in a future state was common among the Indians, and rejoicing in the prospect of partaking the happiness of their forefathers, they followed the Spaniards with alacrity. More than forty thousand were thus betrayed to the miseries which overwhelmed the natives of Hayti, whilst their betrayers glorified themselves in the simplicity of their victims.†

\* Herrera.

† Herrera, Dec. 1. l. 7. c. 1.

Peter Martyr, when speaking of these unfortunates, says, "Many of them in the anguish of despair obstinately refused all manner of subsistence, and retiring to desert caves and unfrequented woods, silently gave up the ghost. Others repairing to the sea-coast, on the northern side of Hispaniola, cast many a longing look towards that part of the ocean where they suppose their own islands to be situated; and as the sea-breeze rises, they eagerly inhale it, fondly believing that it has lately visited their own happy valleys, and comes fraught with the breath of those they love, their wives and their children. With this idea, they continue for hours on the coast, until nature becomes utterly exhausted; when, stretching out their arms towards the ocean, as if to take a last embrace of their distant country and relations, they sink down and expire without a groan."—"One of the Lucayans," continues the same author, "who was more desirous of life, or had greater courage than most of his countrymen, took upon him a bold and difficult piece of work. Having been used to building cottages in his native country, he procured instruments of stone, and cut down a large spongy tree, called Jamma, (the bombax or wild cotton tree) the body of which he dexterously scooped into a canoe. He then provided himself with some oars, some Indian corn, and a few gourds of water, and prevailed on another man and a woman to embark with him on a voyage to the Lucayos islands. Their navigation was prosperous for near two hundred miles, and they were almost in sight of their own long-lost shores, when unfortunately they were met by a Spanish ship, which brought them back to slavery and sorrow. The canoe is still preserved in Hispaniola as a singular curiosity, considering the circumstances under which it was made."\*

\* Decade, 7.



VI. The rich returns from Hispaniola, induced Ferdinand to bestow his attention upon projects of further discovery and improvement. Of the former we shall hereafter treat, but will notice here the progress of affairs at Hispaniola, and the settlement of the neighbouring islands. Whilst encouraging various attempts for the exploration of the continent, the king commanded Ovando to procure more certain and authentic information relative to his immediate vicinity. The governor accordingly dispatched Sebastian de Ocampo, to determine whether Cuba were an island, or part of the continent, as Columbus had erroneously supposed. Ocampo employed eight months in this service; during which he circumnavigated the island, landing at various points to survey the country. He careened his vessels in the admirable port of the Havana, thence called Porto de Carenas; and spent considerable time in the large and safe port of Xagua, where he was supplied with abundance of quails and fish; the latter taken in weirs of cane, which were sufficient in this placid harbour. In the mean time, John Ponce de Leon, commandant of the province of Higüey, having learned that gold was abundant in the island of Borriquen, since known as St. John de Porto Rico, obtained permission from Ovando to explore it. No attempt had been hitherto made for this purpose, although it lay within sight of Hispaniola, at twelve or fifteen leagues distance. The island is chiefly composed of high mountains. Its valleys are fertile, and in the streams which watered them, gold was found, little inferior to that of San Domingo. It is in length about forty, and in breadth fifteen or sixteen leagues. Leon was favourably received by the natives, who provided cheerfully for a small colony which he left there. The government of this island had been given by the king to a cavalier, named

Christoval de Sotomayor; but after the arrival of Don Diego Columbus in the Indies, he sent over additional settlers, and appointed Juan Ceron lieutenant governor, and Miguel Diaz a servant of his uncle Bartholomew, his alcade. Ponce de Leon also established himself upon the island with his family, and on the recommendation of his patron Ovando, was soon after appointed governor, by a commission which made him independent of the admiral. He arrested Ceron and Diaz on some frivolous pretence, and sent them to Spain, to render an account of their administration to the king. But the representations of Columbus induced the monarch to restore them to their offices; charging them, however, to treat Leon with favour and distinction. When their numbers had increased, the conduct of the Spaniards towards the Indians assumed here the same complexion as in Hispaniola. An attempt of the natives to free themselves from the yoke, was called rebellion, and was punished with the usual excesses. The oppressed Indians called the Caribs, their former enemies, to their assistance. The latter promptly obeyed, but their courage availed not. The Spaniards, under the conduct of Leon, aided by their dogs, with little difficulty and slight loss, reduced them to submission.\*

VII. Since the death of the first admiral, his heir had not ceased to solicit the restoration of his rights.

\* The Spanish historians have preserved the name of a dog, *Bezerillo*, who was much distinguished in this species of warfare; and whose master drew for his services a soldier's full share of booty, whether of gold, slaves, or other things. So much was this animal dreaded by the Indians, that they had greater fear of ten Spaniards supported by him, than of a hundred without him. The progeny of this blood-hound was highly prized by the *Conquistadores*, and one of his whelps, carried by Nunez to the continent, did not by want of ferocity disgrace his sire. See *Herrera*, Dec. 1. lib. 8, c. 13.

But the reasons which had induced the king to resist the claims of justice and gratitude on the part of the father, were equally powerful against the pretensions of the son. After two years' importunity, he at length obtained permission to institute a suit against the king before the council of the Indies. This court, with honorable independence, gave judgment at various times in his favor on every point of his demand. It is probable that their decision alone upon matters which had never been doubtful, would not have changed the policy of the king; but it gave the admiral the means of acquiring irresistible influence. By the first judgment of the council, his title to exalted rank and immense wealth was publicly established, and justified him in seeking an alliance with the most distinguished subjects of the realm. He married Donna Maria, daughter of Don Ferdinand de Toledo, grand commentador of Leon, brother of the duke of Alva, and cousin-german to the king. Thus it became the interest of this powerful family to support the claims of the admiral, and Ferdinand could not entirely resist their solicitations. But whilst he appointed Diego governor of Hispaniola, as a favor, he refused him the title and authority of viceroy, which had been adjudged to him.\*

VIII. The admiral was accompanied to Hispaniola† by his wife, who was honoured by the courtesy and justice of her countrymen with the title of vice-queen;—by his brother, and his uncles, and by a numerous retinue of both sexes, among whom were some maidens of quality, who probably went forth to seek, and who found, husbands, among the most distinguished men of the Indies. The arrival of Don Diego introduced into Hispaniola a magnificence hitherto unknown; and his attendants, differ-

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 7.

† July, 1509.

ing in rank and character greatly from most of those who had hitherto emigrated to the new world, gave stability and lustre to the colony; and from them the most distinguished families of Spanish America are descended.

IX. The instructions of the king displayed great regard for the religious improvement and spiritual welfare of the Indians, though little for their temporal happiness. He confirmed the iniquitous *repartimientos*, and formed them into a regular system, by which the Indians were distributed into numerical allotments proportioned to the rank of their masters. To each officer appointed by the king, one hundred were given; to a married knight, eighty; to a married squire, seventy; and to a wedded labourer, thirty. To the grant was annexed a condition, that the masters should instruct their slaves in the faith, and pay for each, to the public treasury, an annual tribute of a peso of gold. The waste of human life under this system was foreseen, and provision made for it, by permission to import slaves from other islands. Immediately after the arrival of Don Diego at Hispaniola, he distributed such Indians as were then unappropriated among his relatives and attendants.

X. The island of Cubagua, where Columbus in his third voyage obtained the first pearls, found by him in America, small, barren, and almost destitute of wood and water, was valuable to the crown, and attracted the attention of the king, by its pearl fishery. The inhabitants of Hispaniola drew from this source considerable wealth, employing the Indians of the Lucayan isles in the fishery. In this, as in almost every other labour, the workmen were overwrought, and prematurely destroyed. By the command of the king, Don Diego established a colony here, for the more regular and successful prosecution of the fishery. The royal *Quint*, or

fifth, amounted to fifteen thousand ducats, which, according to the value of the metals at this time, was a considerable sum. Until 1530, the value of the pearls sent to Europe, on a yearly average, exceeded eight hundred thousand dollars, being nearly one-half of the whole produce of the mines of America at that period.\* Pearls were so much the more sought after, as the luxury of Asia had been introduced into Europe by two ways diametrically opposite; that of Constantinople, where the Palæogi wore garments covered with strings of pearls; and that of Grenada, the residence of the Moorish kings, who displayed at their court all the splendour of the East. The pearls of the East Indies were preferred to those of the West; but the number of the latter, which circulated in commerce, was not less considerable, in the times which immediately followed the discovery of America. In Italy, as well as in Spain, the islet of Cubagua became the object of numerous mercantile speculations.†

But this fishery diminished rapidly toward the end of the sixteenth century, and had long ceased before 1683.‡ The industry of the Venetians, who imitated fine pearls with great exactness, and the frequent use of cut diamonds,§ rendered it less lucrative. At the same time, the oysters which yielded the pearls became scarce, not, as it is believed, from popular tradition, that, frightened by the noise of the oars, they conveyed themselves elsewhere; but because their propagation had been prevented by the wasteful destruction of the shells.

\* The mines did not then furnish more than two millions of piastres.

† Humboldt's Personal Narrative, 2 vol. p. 279.

‡ De Laet. Nov. Orbis, p. 669.

§ The cutting of diamonds was invented by Lewis de Berquen, in 1456, but it became common only in the following century.

At the isle of Ceylon, where, in the bay of Condeatchy, the fishery employs six hundred divers, and where the annual produce is more than a million of dollars, it has vainly been attempted to transplant the animals to other parts of the coast. The government permits fishing there only during a single month, while at Cubagua the fishery was prosecuted at all seasons. To form an idea of the destruction of the oysters, we must remember that a boat sometimes collects in two or three weeks more than thirty-five thousand. The animal lives but nine or ten years; and it is only in its fourth year that the pearls begin to show themselves. In ten thousand shells, there is often not a single pearl of value. At present, Spanish America furnishes no other pearls for trade than those of the gulf of Panama, and the mouth of the Rio de la Hacha.\*

XI. In the grant made by the king of several portions of Terra Firma to Ojeda and Nicuesa, he had annexed the island of Jamaica as a joint appendage, for the purpose of supplying them with provisions. This was in direct violation of the rights of Columbus, and though he dared not openly contravene the designs of these adventurers, he discouraged their expedition to the continent; and contemning some vapourous threats of Ojeda, possessed himself of Jamaica. He dispatched Don Juan de Esquibel thither with seventy men, who laid the foundations of the first colony in this island.†

The *conquest* of the island was effected without much difficulty, and, in the language of Herrera, without a *profusion of blood*;‡ and the Indians were

\* Humboldt's Personal Narrative, 2 vol. p. 280.

† 1510, A. D. Herrera.

‡ *Sin derramamiento de sangre.*



successfully employed in the culture of cotton, and other labours of agriculture. So prudent and prosperous was the conduct of Esquibel, that the admiral recommended him to the notice of the king, so earnestly indeed, that the jealous monarch suspected some sinister design, and gave instructions to Passamonte, his treasurer at San Domingo, to inquire who Esquibel was, and what might be his intentions.\*

XII. In the following year, 1511,† Don Diego also commenced the colonization of Cuba. He confided this enterprize to Diego Valasquez, who had accompanied his father on his second voyage, and had been long established in Xaragua, where he had acquired a large fortune, and a high character for prudence, probity, and humanity. He embarked with three hundred men only. The distance from Hispaniola to Cuba being not more than eighteen leagues, many of the oppressed natives of the former had escaped thither. Among these was the Cacique Hatuey, who had raised himself to a distinguished command in his adopted country, which he prepared to defend against the invader. He assembled his people, reminded them of the sufferings which the Spaniards had inflicted, and declared that their crimes were offerings to the God whom they loved and worshipped. "This," said he, producing a piece of gold, "is the God whom they worship. They come hither only to seek him. Let us too worship this God, in order that he may grant us his protection. But let us not keep him amongst us, but cast him into the sea; for, should we secrete him in our bowels, the Spaniards would drag him thence." At the conclusion of his speech, the Indians commenced a religious song and dance,

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 5.

† November.

which they closed by casting the piece of gold into the ocean.\*

But this mystical devotion to the supposed God of the Christians, did not avert their approach. Hatuey boldly met Valasquez on the shore, and vainly strove to drive him back to his ships. Compelled to retire into the woods, he maintained a desultory warfare of several months' continuance, in which many of his people were slain, and many captured and distributed as slaves among the invaders. At length, he was also made prisoner; and Valasquez considering him as a slave who had fled from labour and taken arms against his master, condemned him to be burned to death. When at the stake, a Franciscan friar, labouring to convert him, promised him immediate admittance to the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the Christian faith. Hatuey asked, "Are there any Spaniards in the happy country of which you speak?" "Yes," replied the monk, "but only such as are worthy and good." "The best of them," returned the indignant chief, "have neither worth nor goodness. I will not go to a place where I may meet one of the accursed race." This dreadful severity induced the immediate submission of the district of Mansi, over which the Cacique had ruled.\*

In the progress of his enterprize, Valasquez received considerable aid from the settlers of Jamaica, particularly from Panfilo de Narvez, who joined him with a band of thirty archers.† Having made him his lieutenant, he employed him in various incursions in the interior of the island, whilst he was himself engaged in founding the town of Baracoa, the first Spanish settlement of Cuba. In one of these excursions, we have a striking illustration of the weakness and timidity of the Indian character.

\* Herrera.

† A. D. 1512.

Mounted on horseback at the head of his archers, Narvez was everywhere received with astonishment, awe, and submission. At one town only, were hostilities attempted. Here, nearly seven thousand Indians had assembled, who, presuming on the vast disparity of the Spanish force, and stimulated by a desire to possess the Spanish garments and weapons, made a night attack upon the little party. The commander was wounded and prostrated by a stone; but recovering himself, he mounted his horse in his shirt, attached some bells to the crupper, and sallied forth against the enemy. But, terrified by the sight of the horse, the sound of the bells, and the boldness of the rider, the Indians fled; and in dread of punishment abandoned their province, seeking refuge at fifty leagues' distance. It is grateful to add, that, at the instance of the benevolent Las Casas, who accompanied the expedition, the fugitives were forgiven, and permitted to return to their homes.

The force of Narvez was subsequently increased to a hundred men, with whom he traversed and reduced the whole island. For this easy and almost bloodless victory he was indebted to the good Las Casas, whose kindness merited and obtained the confidence of the natives. He was their instructor, friend, and patron. During the march of the army, he prevented irritating collisions with the Indians, by requiring them to appropriate a part of their villages to the use of the soldiers, who were forbidden, under pain of death, to invade the Indian quarter. What a contrast does this story present with the horrors of the progress of Margaritte in Hispaniola! and how much reason does it not give to regret, that the noble enterprize, courage, and fortitude of the Spanish adventurers were not always directed by like wisdom and humanity! To enforce the obedience of the simple natives, no

other means were necessary than to threaten them with the displeasure of their good father. During the progress of Narvez, which occupied the greater part of two years, one instance of barbarity only is recorded. At the village of Caonao, above two thousand Indians, assembled in the public square, were sitting upon their hams viewing the Spanish horses with fear and admiration, when one of the soldiers suddenly drew his sword, and the others, either from wantonness or panic, or from that indescribable sympathy which governs our actions, followed his example, and fell upon the Indians, wounding many, before Las Casas or their commander could effectually interfere.\*

Valasquez adopted the same policy towards the Indians which had been established in Hispaniola. *Repartimientos* were made among the *Conquistadores* or conquerors, as they styled themselves, and the slaves were compelled to labour in the mines, or on the plantations, at the will of their masters. Gold was gathered in considerable quantities; nor were the more profitable and certain sources of wealth and comfort neglected. Agriculture and the necessary mechanic arts were encouraged; and before the expiration of three years from his landing, Valasquez had established seven Spanish towns, of which Baracoa, St. Jago, and Havana were the principal. Uninterrupted prosperity waited on his administration, and riches were showered in abundance upon him. They served, however, but to excite his ambition, and to stimulate him to throw off the authority of his superiors; a vice which was common with the adventurers to America, from the first voyage of the discoverer. Valasquez became impatient of the light control of the admiral, and sought to obtain an independent commission from the king.\*

\* Herrera.

XIII. In consequence of the reappointment of Ceron and Diaz to the government of Porto Rico, Ponce de Leon, thrown out of employment, sought to engage himself in new enterprizes. Having received information of lands to the northward, he resolved to attempt discovery in that direction. He equipped and manned three vessels,\* and proceeded, by way of the Lucayan and Bahama islands, touching occasionally, to Guanahani, or St. Salvador, the first island discovered by Columbus. Thence, steering northwest, he arrived, on the 27th of March, being Easter-day, at a country hitherto unknown to the Spaniards, in  $30^{\circ} 8' N. L.$ , to which he gave the name of Florida, because of its verdant appearance, and that it was first seen on Palm Sunday. He followed the shore to the southward a considerable distance beyond Cape Florida, which he called *El Cabo de Corrientes*, having a clean coast, but struggling with the current of the Gulf stream, which was now, for the first time, observed by Europeans. The natives everywhere proved hostile; resisting all attempts of the Spaniards to land, and combating them when they forced their way to shore. In these conflicts, several Indians were killed, and some made captive, who were taken to Hispaniola. But these injuries were not wholly unavenged; one Spaniard, at least, falling by the hands of the injured. Leon fell in with, and gave name to, the Martyr and Dry Tortugas islands; naming the latter from the abundance of turtle which he found upon them.

XIV. To his present enterprize, Leon was excited by the love of fame and wealth; and also by the hope of discovering the isle of *Bimini*, and its miraculous fountain, whose waters renewed the youth and restored the vigour of all who bathed in

\* A. D. 1512. March 3.

them. He ranged the Bahama islands for some days, in quest of the land containing this wonderful spring; but finally abandoned the search, and returned to Porto Rico; first dispatching one of his vessels under Perez de Ortubia, and the pilot Antonio de Alaminos, to prosecute the inquiry. They succeeded in discovering the island of Bimini, which was large, pleasant, and abounding in delightful groves and streams; but, alas! the fountain of rejuvenescence is yet undiscovered. Historians have expressed surprize, that so wild an imagination should be found among rational and enlightened men. But do we not entertain at this day opinions as little supported by truth and philosophy? At the commencement of the 16th century, the pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone, and the Elixir of Life, was eagerly followed by the devotees of science; and we may allow to the bold and illiterate adventurers of the New World, the belief, that nature might produce there the waters of youth, as she did the veins of gold that mingled with the soil. The beneficial results of this voyage were, a more extended knowledge of the Bahama chain of islands and their many currents, the discovery of Florida, then and long after supposed to be an island, and of the great Bahama channel, through which a short passage was subsequently found from the coast of Darien to Europe. Leon entertained so high an opinion of his services, that he repaired to court, to solicit a reward for his labours from the king.\*

Ferdinand bestowed upon him the title of Adelantado of the island of Bimini and of Florida. But Leon did not immediately make an attempt to settle the countries thus assigned. In 1514, the king gave him the command of three ships fitted out in

\* Herrera, Decade 1, lib. ix. ch. xi.



Seville, destined to scour the Carib islands, and free the seas of Caribbean marauders. He seems not to have conducted this enterprize with due skill and judgment, having suffered himself to be surprized by the enemy whilst engaged in taking in wood and water at Guadaloupe, when many of his party were slain, and some women, who had been landed from the ships, were carried off to the mountains. Humbled by this blow, he abandoned the enterprize to a captain named Zuñiga, and retired to the government of Porto Rico, where he remained inactive, until the splendid success of Cortes and the discovery that Florida was part of the continent roused him to action. Emulous of the exploits of that renowned commander, he sailed, in 1521, with two vessels, in which he ventured his whole fortune, for his government of Florida. His invasion was boldly and successfully repelled; and being himself wounded by an arrow in the thigh, he sailed to Cuba, where he soon after died.\*

XV. Although Ferdinand had been prevailed on to commit the government of the Indies to Don Diego Columbus, he never gave him his confidence; believing him as much disposed, as he was interested, to assume the rights of his father. The subordinate officers of the admiral's government, especially those immediately dependent upon the king, at the head of whom was Miguel de Passamonte, the royal treasurer, fomented this jealousy, inso-much that the king summoned the Adelantado, Bartholomew Columbus, for the purpose of advising with him on the reports which the disaffected had made against his nephew.† Having rewarded his zeal and devotion by the grant of the small island of Mona,‡ and a further donation of two hundred

\* Herrera. Irving. Voyages of the companions of Columbus.

† A. D. 1511. Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. ix. ch. 5.

‡ Situated between the islands of Hispaniola and Porto Rico

Indians in Hispaniola, he commanded his return with particular instructions to the admiral for his public and private conduct. Don Diego wanted neither inclination nor ability to administer his government wisely; nor is there any evidence that he sought more power than justly pertained to his commission. Still the inveterate jealousy of the king circumscribed all his operations. The declining age of Ferdinand devolved the affairs of the Indies chiefly upon Fonseca and the commander Lopez de Conchillos. These ministers readily lent themselves to the jealousy of their master, and delighted to reduce the power of a subject so great as the admiral, whose wealth and influence, in the full enjoyment of his rights, would have awed the sovereign, and overshadowed his courtiers. The treasurer, Passamonte, who was a favorite of Fonseca, was encouraged to resist the commands of the governor. He gathered under his direction the remnant of Roldan's conspirators, and others, who made a party sufficiently strong to perplex the administration. By their intrigues, the appellate judicial power which belonged to his office was transferred to judges of appeal specially appointed; and, finally, the power of making *repartimientos*, the most valuable he possessed, was taken away from him. To effect this, the king created a new office, called *Repartidor de los Indios*,\* bestowing it upon Rodrigo Albuquerque, a relative of Zapata, his confidential minister. Indignant at a measure alike unjust and humiliating, Don Diego resolved to return to Spain, vainly believing that his presence would procure redress.† Albuquerque administered this office solely with a view to his own emolument. By a census of the Indians, it appeared that their number, which, in 1508, had

\* Distributor of the Indians.

† A. D. 1514.

amounted to sixty thousand, had been reduced to fourteen thousand. These he divided into lots, and sold them to the highest bidder; a method of distribution which cruelly broke the ties of affection and vicinage, and added greatly to the sufferings of this devoted race; whilst the heavier burthens and more intolerable labours imposed by new masters, completed its misery and hastened its extinction.\*

XVI. The violence of these proceedings, with their fatal consequences, excited complaints from the aggrieved, and the commiseration of the humane. From the time that ecclesiastics had been sent to America, they perceived that the rigour with which their countrymen treated the natives, rendered their ministry fruitless. In conformity to the mild spirit of their religion, they early remonstrated against the maxims of the planters, and condemned the *repartimientos*, as contrary to natural justice, the precepts of Christianity, and sound policy. The Dominicans, to whom the instruction of the Americans was originally committed, were most vehement in testifying against the *repartimientos*. In the year 1511, Montesino, one of their most eminent preachers, inveighed against this practice, in the great church at St. Domingo, with the vehemence of popular eloquence. Don Diego Columbus, the principal officers of the colony, and the laymen, who had been his hearers, complained of the monk to his superiors; but they, instead of condemning, applauded his doctrine, as alike serviceable to God and the king. The Franciscans, the rivals of the Dominicans, were inclined to take part with the laity, and to defend the *repartimientos*. But, as they could not with decency give their avowed approbation to a system of oppression so

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 9, 10. 1 Robertson's Am. 197, 198.

repugnant to the spirit of religion, they endeavoured to palliate what they could not justify ; alleging, in excuse for the conduct of their countrymen, that it was not possible to carry on any improvement in the colony, unless the Spaniards had such dominion over the natives, that they could compel them to labour.\*

XVII. This opposition, so far from inducing the Dominicans to relax in their measures, incited them to take a more lofty position. They declared the slavery of the Indians a grievous sin, and refused to absolve, or admit to the sacrament, such of their countrymen as continued to hold the natives in servitude. Both parties applied to the king, and sent deputies to support their respective opinions. Ferdinand referred the important subject to a committee of his privy-council, assisted by the most eminent civilians and divines of Spain. After a long discussion, the speculative point in controversy was determined in favour of the Dominicans ; the Indians were declared to be a free people, and entitled to all the natural rights of men. But, notwithstanding this decision, the *repartimientos* were not discontinued. Yet, as the report of the committee settled the principle for which the Dominicans contended, they renewed their efforts to obtain relief for the Indians with additional boldness and zeal, which alarmed the planters, and disturbed the quiet of the colony. At length Ferdinand issued a decree of his privy-council,† delaring—that, after mature consideration of the apostolic bull, and other titles, by which the crown of Castile claimed its possessions in the new world, the servitude of the Indians was warranted by the laws both of God and man—that, unless they were subjected to the

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 8. c. 11. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. 1 Robert. Am. p. 200.

† A. D. 1513.

dominion of the Spaniards, and compelled to reside under their inspection, it would be impossible to reclaim them from idolatry, or to instruct them in the principles of the Christian faith—that no farther scruple ought to be entertained concerning the lawfulness of the *repartimientos*, as the king and council were willing to take the charge of *that* upon their own consciences—and that the Dominicans and monks of other religious orders, should abstain, for the future, from those invectives which, from an excess of charitable, but ill-informed zeal, they had uttered against the practice. The true reason of this decree will be found in the fact, that the bishop Fonseca, the principal director of American affairs, had eight hundred Indians in property; the commander, Lope de Conchillos, his chief associate in that department, eleven hundred; and other favourites, considerable numbers in the islands of Hispaniola, Porto Rico, Cuba, and Jamaica.\*

That his intention of adhering to this decree might be fully understood, Ferdinand conferred new grants of Indians upon his courtiers. But, that he might not seem altogether inattentive to the rights of humanity, he published an edict, by which he endeavoured to provide for the mild treatment of the Indians. He commanded that houses should be built for them; he regulated the nature of the work which they should be required to perform; he prescribed the mode in which they should be clothed and fed, and gave directions for their instruction in Christian morality.\*

But the Dominicans, judging of the future by the past, perceived the inefficacy of these provisions, and foretold that, as long as it was the interest of individuals to treat the Indians with rigour, no public regulations could render their servitude mild or

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14.

tolerable. They considered it as vain to spend their own time and strength in attempting to communicate the sublime principles of religion to men whose spirits were broken, and whose faculties were impaired by oppression. Some of them, in despair, requested permission of their superiors to remove to the continent, and pursue the object of their mission among such of the natives as were not corrupted by the example of the Spaniards, nor alienated by their cruelty from the Christian faith. And such as remained in Hispaniola continued to remonstrate with decent firmness against the servitude of the Indians.\*

XVIII. The inhuman measures of Albuquerque revived the zeal of the Dominicans, and called forth an advocate for the Indians, who possessed the courage, talents, and activity requisite to support a desperate cause. Bartholomew Las Casas was a native of Seville, and one of the clergymen sent with Columbus in his second voyage to Hispaniola, in order to settle in that island. He followed Valasques to Cuba, and contributed, as we have above observed, more by his humanity and justice to the subjection of that island, than the arms of the soldiers. In the distribution of the Indians there, he accepted an allotment of these unhappy people; but having adopted the conviction of the Dominicans, he surrendered all that had fallen to his share; declaring that he should ever bewail his misfortune and guilt in having exercised for a moment this impious dominion over his fellow-creatures.† From that time he became the avowed patron of the Indians; and by his bold interposition in their behalf, and the respect imposed by his abilities and character, he succeeded in setting some bounds to

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14. Touron, Hist. Gen. de l'Amerique, tom. i. p. 252.

† A. D. 1514.



the excesses of his countrymen. He did not fail to remonstrate earnestly against the proceedings of Albuquerque; and finding his admonitions vain, he determined to proceed to Spain, having the most sanguine hopes of opening the eyes and softening the heart of the king, by that striking picture of the oppression of his subjects which he would exhibit to his view.\*

He represented to the monarch, whom he found in a declining state of health, all the fatal effects of the *repartimientos*; boldly charging him with the guilt of this impious measure, which had brought misery and destruction upon a numerous and innocent race of men, whom Providence had placed under his protection. Ferdinand, whose mind and body were enfeebled by disease, was alarmed at a charge of impiety, which at another juncture he might have despised. He listened with deep compunction to reproof, and promised seriously to consider of the means of redressing the evil. But death prevented him from executing his resolution.† Charles of Austria, to whom all his crowns devolved, resided at that time in his paternal dominions in the Low Countries. Las Casas prepared immediately to set out for Flanders, to engage the mind of the young monarch, when Cardinal Ximenes, the regent of Castile, forbidding his departure, promised to hear his complaints in person.

XIX. This bold and sagacious minister, confiding in his own judgment, and heedless of precedent, struck out an original plan which astonished the ministers, trained under the cautious administration of Ferdinand. Disregarding the rights of Don Diego Columbus, and the regulations established

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12. Dec. 2. lib. 1. c. 11. Davilla Padilla, p. 304.

† 23d January, 1516.

by the late king, he resolved to send three persons to America, as superintendents of all the colonies there, with authority, after examining all circumstances on the spot, to decide finally upon the point in question. Much difficulty attended the choice of men for this important function. The laymen in America, and those concerned in the administration of its affairs, had prejudged the subject, and their reason waited on their interests. The judgment of the ecclesiastics would be free from pecuniary bias, and to them he resolved to intrust the commission. The Dominicans and Franciscans had espoused opposite sides of the controversy, and he therefore excluded the members of both fraternities; and made his selection from the monks of St. Jerome, a small but respectable order in Spain. The choice fell on Bernardino de Manzanedo, Luis de Figueroa, and the prior of St. Juan de Ortega de Burgos. To them was joined Zuazo, a private lawyer of distinguished probity, with unlimited power to regulate all judicial proceedings in the colonies. Las Casas was appointed to accompany them, with the title of "*Protector of the Indians.*"\*

XX. The delegation of these extraordinary powers to obscure and humble individuals, started Zapata and the ministers of the late king; and believing the measure to be wild and dangerous, they refused to issue the dispatches necessary for carrying it into execution. But Ximenes brooked no opposition to his will; and the refractory ministers were compelled to obey his peremptory orders. Immediately on the arrival of the superintendents with their associates, Zuazo and Las Casas, at San Domingo, they proceeded to exercise their powers. The first act of their authority was the liberation of all the Indians who had been granted to persons

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. 11. c. 3. 6. 1 Robertson's Am.

† A. D. 1516.

not residing in America. This measure, which the colonists feared would become general, excited great alarm, which was however soon dissipated by the caution and prudence of the commissioners. They displayed a knowledge of the world and of business, together with a moderation and gentleness, rarely acquired in monastic life. They sought information from every quarter, and carefully compared and weighed the several accounts they received; and finally came to a conclusion adverse to the plan proposed by Las Casas, and recommended by the cardinal. They adopted the opinion that the Spaniards settled in America were too few in number to work the mines, or cultivate the country, without the labour of the natives;—that, such was the incurable indolence of this people, that it could be overcome only by the authority of a master;—and that the watchfulness and discipline of a superior was indispensable, to enforce their attendance upon religious instruction, and the observance of such rites of Christianity as they had already been taught.

XXI. For these reasons, the superintendents deemed it necessary to tolerate the *repartimientos*, and to suffer the Indians to remain under subjection to their Spanish masters. But they endeavoured to moderate the evils of this policy, and to secure to the natives the best treatment compatible with a state of servitude. For this purpose they revived former regulations, and prescribed new ones; and by their authority, example, and exhortation, sought to inspire their countrymen with sentiments of equity and gentleness towards the unhappy people upon whose industry they depended. Zuazo, in his department, seconded the endeavours of the superintendents. He reformed the courts of justice, rendering their decisions equitable and expeditious; and introduced various regulations,

improving the interior police of the colony. This beneficial employment of authority, and the unexpected moderation of the superintendents, gave general satisfaction; and all men paid the tribute of their praise to the courage of Ximenes in forming his plan, and to his sagacity in the selection of agents qualified for their high trust.\*

XXII. Las Casas was alone dissatisfied. The enslavement of the Indians was avowedly unrighteous, a violation of the soundest and clearest principles of natural justice, and productive of a mass of human misery which nothing but the grossest avarice would dare to weigh against the molten gold, and the sugar and cotton plantations of the colonists. He therefore justly regarded the sacrifice of these principles as an unhallowed and timid policy; and as the "*Protector of the Indians*," he expressed his opinions with zeal, perhaps with intemperance, and boldly demanded that the superintendents should not bereave the natives of the common rights of mankind. They received his most violent remonstrances without emotion, and pertinaciously adhered to their own system. But the colonists did not bear with him so patiently; they threatened violence to his person, and he found it necessary to seek shelter in a convent. Perceiving his efforts in America to be fruitless, he returned to Europe with a fixed resolution not to abandon a people so cruelly oppressed.††

XXIII. When Las Casas arrived in Spain, he found the cardinal Ximenes languishing under a mortal distemper, and preparing to resign his authority to the young king who was daily expected from Flanders. He was compelled, therefore, to postpone his efforts in American affairs. Charles

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 15. 1 Roberts. Am.

† Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 16. ib.

† May, A. D. 1517.

arrived, took possession of the government, and soon after, by the decease of Ximenes, lost an able and faithful minister; the proximate cause of whose death was the ingratitude of his prince. Many of the Flemish nobility accompanied their sovereign to Spain, and obtained, among other departments of the administration, that established for the direction of American affairs. Las Casas applied to the new ministers with industry and address; and in despite of the opposition of Father Mançanedo, whom the superintendents had sent to Spain to resist his appeal, his exertions to obtain a reconsideration of the measures relating to the Indians were successful. The fathers of St. Jerome were recalled, together with their associate Zuazo. Roderigo de Figueroa, an eminent lawyer, was appointed chief justice of Hispaniola, and instructed to examine once more, with attention, the policy relative to the natives; and, in the mean time, to do all in his power to alleviate their sufferings, and to prevent the extinction of their race.\*

XXIV. But Las Casas was yet far from his great object. The supposed impossibility of carrying on improvement in America, unless the natives were subjected to labour, was an insuperable objection against endowing them with the character of free subjects. To obviate this, he proposed to purchase a sufficient number of negroes from the Portuguese settlements on the coast of Africa, and to transport them to America, to be employed as slaves. One of the first uses which the Portuguese made of their discoveries in Africa, was the revival of the trade in slaves. In the year 1442, Gonsalez, who, two years before, had seized some Moors near Cape Bojador, was compelled, by prince Henry, to carry his prisoners back to Africa. He landed them

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 16. 19. 21. lib. iii. c. 7, 8.

at Rio del Oro, and received from the Moors, in exchange, ten blacks and a quantity of gold dust, with which he returned to Lisbon. This success stimulated the avarice of his countrymen; who, in the course of a few succeeding years, fitted out no less than thirty-seven ships in pursuit of the same gainful but iniquitous traffic. In 1481, the Portuguese built a fort on the gold coast; another, some time afterwards, on the island of Arguin; and a third at Loango Saint Paul's, on the coast of Angola; and the king of Portugal took the title of Lord of Guinea. So early as the year 1503, some negro slaves had been sent to the New World; but Ovando forbade their further importation, alleging that they taught the Indians all manner of wickedness, and rendered them less tractable. In the year 1511, Ferdinand revoked the prohibition, and they were imported in greater numbers. They proved more robust and hardy than the natives of America; more capable of enduring, and more patient under servitude; so that the labour of one negro was computed to be equal to that of four Indians. Cardinal Ximenes, however, when solicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the proposition; perceiving the iniquity of perpetuating the slavery of one race of men, in order that another might be restored to liberty. Unfortunately for the sons of Africa, the plan of Las Casas was adopted by Charles, who granted a patent to one of his Flemish favourites, containing an exclusive right of importing four thousand negroes into America. The favourite sold the patent to some Genoese merchants for twenty-five thousand ducats, and they were the first who brought into a regular form the commerce for slaves between Africa and America, since carried on to an amazing extent.\*†

\* Robertson's Am. Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. v. c. 12. lib. viii. c. 9. c. 5.  
Ibid. Dec. 2. lib. 11. c. 8.

† A. D. 1517



XXV. The conduct of Las Casas, upon this occasion, has been severely reprehended by a distinguished historian,\* who avers that, "from the inconsistency natural to men, who hurry with headlong impetuosity towards a favourite point, he was incapable" of taking the view of his proposition which had struck the cardinal : and that "while he contended earnestly for the liberty of the people born in one quarter of the globe, he laboured to enslave the inhabitants of another region ; and in the warmth of his zeal to save the Americans from the yoke, pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impose one still heavier upon the Africans." Another valuable writer† says, "the conduct of Las Casas is not fully and fairly stated in the foregoing representation ; for it supposes, that each class of people (the negroes and Indians) was found in a similar condition and situation of life ; whereas it is notorious, that many of the negroes imported from Africa are born of enslaved parents, are bred up as slaves themselves, and as such have been habituated to labour from their infancy." "On the other hand, the condition of the Indians was widely removed from a state of slavery, having been so used to the enjoyment of liberty, in a life of plenty and pastime, that the yoke of servitude was insupportable to them ; and assuredly, if they would have embraced our holy religion, they would have been the happiest of human beings in the enjoyment of their ancient freedom.‡ Las Casas therefore contended, reasonably enough, that men inured to servitude and drudgery, who could experience no alteration of circumstances from a change of masters, and who felt not the sentiments which freedom alone can inspire, were not so great objects of com-

\* Robertson, 1 vol. Hist. Am. p. 209.

† Edward's Hist. West Ind. vol. 2. p. 241

‡ Pet. Martyr, Decad.

miseration, as those who, having always enjoyed the sweets of unbounded liberty, were suddenly deprived of it, and urged to tasks of labour which their strength was unable to perform. Las Casas could neither prevent, nor foresee, the abuses and evils that have arisen from the system of traffic recommended by him, and is not therefore justly chargeable with the rashness, absurdity, and iniquity which have since been imputed to his conduct." We do not feel that this defence is successful. It is erroneous in fact, and false in logic. And we cannot hesitate to say, that the philanthropy of the worthy friar was partial, and that a blind indulgence of his sympathy for the Indians, caused him to promote an evil, inferior only to that he would have remedied. The Africans torn from their country were not all born to slavery, but thousands have been enslaved in their native country to gratify the passions which the slave-trade of the Europeans excited. If they were slaves, it was still criminal to encourage the practice of slavery by joining in the traffic. It cannot be lawful to do evil that good may come: and this simple truth cannot be better illustrated, than by the case before us. The Indians were never relieved from their yoke, but the introduction of the African slave-trade has caused and perpetuated enormities, not at all inferior to the worst committed on the Indian race.\*

XXVI. The Genoese merchants, conducting their operations at first with the rapacity of monopolists, demanded such a high price for negroes, that the number immediately imported into His-

\* Our countryman, Irving, has made a more ingenious, but, we think, not a full defence of Las Casas. He contends truly, that the friar did not originate the trade, that he found it in existence, and in the dernier resort proposed to encourage it as the less of two evils. See 3 *Irv. Columb.* p. 367.

paniola, made little change in the state of the colony. Las Casas, whose zeal was not less inventive, than indefatigable, devised another expedient for the relief of the Indians, at once useful to his country and honourable to himself. The persons who had hitherto settled in America, were sailors and soldiers, employed in the discovery or conquest of the country; the younger sons of noble families, allured by the prospect of acquiring sudden wealth; or desperate adventurers, whose indigence or crimes forced them to abandon their native land. Instead of such men, who were dissolute, rapacious, and incapable of that sober persevering industry which is requisite in forming new states, he proposed to supply the colonies with a sufficient number of labourers and husbandmen from Spain, who should be allured by suitable premiums to remove thither. These, as they were accustomed to fatigue, would be able to perform the work, to which the Indians, from the feebleness of their constitutions, were unequal, and might soon become useful and opulent citizens. But though Hispaniola much needed a recruit of inhabitants, having been visited at this time with the small-pox, which swept off almost all the natives who had survived their long-continued oppression; and though Las Casas had the countenance of the Flemish ministers, this scheme was defeated by Fonseca, who thwarted all his projects.\*

XXVII. Disappointed in his endeavours to ameliorate the condition of the Indians in those places where the Spaniards had already settled, Las Casas turned his attention to the continent, flattering himself that he might prevent the introduction there, of the pernicious system he had so vainly combated in the islands. With this view, he ap-

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 20. A. D. 1518. 1 Robertson's Am.

plied for a grant of the unoccupied country stretching along the sea coast from the gulf of Paria to the western frontier of that province, afterwards known by the name of St. Martha. He proposed to settle there, with a colony composed of husbandmen, labourers, and ecclesiastics ; engaging, in the space of two years, to civilize ten thousand of the natives, and to instruct them so thoroughly in the arts of social life, that, from the fruits of their industry, an annual revenue of fifteen thousand ducats should arise to the king. In ten years, he promised that his improvements should be so far advanced as to yield, annually, sixty thousand ducats. He stipulated, that no sailor or soldier should be permitted to inhabit this district ; and that no Spaniard whatever should enter it without his permission. He even projected to clothe the people whom

- he took with him in some distinguishing garb,
- which did not resemble the Spanish dress, that
- they might appear, to the natives, a different race of men from those which had brought so many calamities upon their country.

Had this plan of Las Casas been carried into effect, and the approach of the whites entirely prevented, Paria might now exhibit a counterpart of Paraguay. The natives might have become docile and obedient to their ghostly rulers ; but, with the many failures in civilizing the Indian race, under the mildest treatment, we may justly doubt of the result in that respect. We think it more probable, that the rulers would have been brought down near to the level of their subjects, than that the intellectual and moral condition of the latter would have been elevated. But, we must also admit, that, if they had been advanced no further than the natives of Paraguay, or the Indians attached to the Spanish missions of South America, their condition would have been somewhat improved, or at least, that they would

have been spared the cruelties to which they were subjected.\*

XXVIII. But to the bishop of Burgos and the council of the Indies, this project appeared chimerical and dangerous. They deemed the faculties of the Americans to be naturally so limited, and their indolence so excessive, that every attempt to instruct or improve them would be fruitless. And they contended that it would be extremely imprudent to give the command of a country, extending above a thousand miles along the coast, to a fanciful, presumptuous enthusiast, a stranger to the affairs of the world, and unacquainted with the arts of government. Las Casas, not discouraged by this repulse, which he had reason to expect, had recourse once more to the Flemish favourites, who zealously patronized his scheme. They prevailed with their master to refer the consideration of this measure to a select number of his privy-counselors; and Las Casas having excepted against the members of the council of the Indies, as partial and interested, they were all excluded. The committee approved the plan, and gave orders for its execution, but restricted the territory allotted to him to three hundred miles along the coast of Cumana, allowing him however to extend it as far as he pleased towards the interior part of the country.\*

XXIX. This resolution was so violently opposed, that the emperor, for such Charles had now become, though accustomed, at this early period of his life, to adopt the sentiments of his ministers with submissive deference, became suspicious of the disinterestedness of the Flemings, and displayed an inclination to examine in person into the state of the question concerning the Americans,

\* Gomara, Hist. Gen. c. 77. Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 3. 1 Robertson's America.

and the proper manner of treating them. An opportunity of making this inquiry with advantage, soon occurred.\* Quevedo, bishop of Darien, who had accompanied Pedrarias to the continent in the year 1513, landed at Barcelona, where the court then resided. It soon became known, that his opinions of the talents and dispositions of the Indians differed from those of Las Casas; and Charles presumed, that by confronting two respectable persons, who had full opportunity and leisure to observe the manners of the people they were required to describe, he might obtain a full and impartial view of their genius and capability.

XXX. At the audience, held on this occasion with extraordinary pomp, the principal courtiers, among whom was Diego Columbus, attended. The bishop of Darien, in a short discourse, lamented the fatal desolation of America, by the extinction of so many of its inhabitants, which he acknowledged was attributable in some degree to the excessive rigour and inconsiderate proceedings of the Spaniards; but he declared that all the aborigines, whom he had seen in the islands or on the continent, appeared to him designed, by the inferiority of their nature, for servitude; and that it would be impossible to instruct or improve them, unless under the continual inspection of a master. Las Casas, at greater length and with more fervour, defended his system. He indignantly rejected the idea that any race of men was born to servitude, as irreligious and inhuman. He asserted, that the faculties of the Americans, though unimproved, were not naturally despicable; that they were capable of receiving instruction in the principles of religion, and of acquiring the industry and the arts which would qualify them for the various offices of

\* June 20, A. D. 1519.



social life ; that the mildness and timidity of their nature rendered them so submissive and docile, that they might be led and formed with a gentle hand. He professed that his intentions in proposing the scheme now under consideration, were pure and disinterested ; and though from the accomplishment of his designs, inestimable benefits would result to the crown of Castile, he never had claimed, and never would receive any recompense on that account.

XXXI. Charles did not feel himself competent, from the information he received at this conference, to establish any general regulations with respect to the Indians ; but as he had full confidence in the integrity of Las Casas, and as his plan was admitted by the bishop of Darien to be worthy of trial, he granted him the district in Cumana above mentioned, with power to establish a colony there.\* Las Casas pushed on the preparations for his voyage with his usual ardour ; but either his own inexperience in business, or the opposition of those who dreaded the success of his enterprize, delayed his progress ; and he was unable to prevail on more than two hundred husbandmen to accompany him to Cumana.

XXXII. His zeal, however, was invincible ; and he set sail with this meagre and incompetent force. He touched at Porto Rico, where he heard of a new and formidable obstacle to his enterprize. When he left America, in the year 1516, the intercourse of the Spaniards with the continent was confined chiefly to the countries adjacent to the gulf of Darien. But as the decrease of the natives in Hispaniola deprived the planters of the means by which they conducted their operations, they sought, by various expedients, to supply that loss. They im-

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 3, 4, 5. Argensola, Annales d'Arragon, 74. 97. Remisal, Hist. Gen. lib. ii. c. 19, 20.

ported negroes, but, as we have already observed, their exorbitant price prevented this practice from becoming general. To procure slaves at an easier rate, vessels were sent to cruize along the coast of the continent. In places where they found themselves inferior in strength, the commanders traded with the natives, and gave European toys in exchange for plates of gold; but where they could surprize or overpower the Indians, they carried them off, and sold them as slaves. In these excursions, such atrocious acts of violence and cruelty were committed, that the Spanish name was held in detestation wherever it was known on the continent. Whenever ships appeared, the inhabitants either fled to the woods, or rushed to the shore in arms to repel the hated invaders. They forced some parties of the Spaniards to retreat with precipitation; they cut off others; and in the violence of their resentment against the whole nation, they murdered two Dominican missionaries, whose zeal had prompted them to settle in the province of Cumana. This outrage against persons revered for their sanctity, excited such indignation among the people of Hispaniola, who, notwithstanding their licentious and cruel proceedings, had a wonderful zeal for religion, and a superstitious respect for its ministers, that they determined to inflict exemplary punishment not only upon the perpetrators of that crime, but upon their whole race. With this view, they gave the command of five ships and three hundred men to Diego Ocampo, with orders to lay waste the country of Cumana by fire and sword, and to transport the inhabitants, as slaves, to Hispaniola. This armament Las Casas found at Porto Rico, and as Ocampo refused to defer his voyage, he perceived that it would be impossible to attempt the execution of his pacific plan in a

country destined to be the seat of war and desolation !\*

XXXIII. To provide against the effects of this unfortunate incident, he proceeded directly for St. Domingo, leaving his followers cantoned out among the planters in Porto Rico. From many concurring causes, his reception here was very unfavourable. In his negotiations for the relief of the Indians, he had censured the conduct of his countrymen settled there, with such honest severity, as rendered him universally odious to them. They considered their own ruin, as the inevitable consequence of his success. They were now elated with the hope of receiving a large supply of slaves from Cumana, which must be relinquished if Las Casas were assisted in settling his projected colony there. Figueroa, in consequence of the instructions which he received in Spain, had made an experiment concerning the capacity of the Indians, that was represented as decisive against the system of Las Casas. He collected in Hispaniola a number of the natives, and settled them in two villages, leaving them at perfect liberty, and with uncontrolled direction of their own actions. But, accustomed to a mode of life widely different from that which takes place wherever civilization has made any considerable progress, they were incapable of assuming new habits at once. Dejected by the misfortunes that had overwhelmed themselves and their country, they exerted so little industry in cultivating the ground, appeared so devoid of solicitude or foresight in providing for their own wants, and were such strangers to system in conducting their affairs, that the Spaniards pronounced them incapable of being formed to live like men in social life,

\* Herrera, Dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 3. April, A. D. 1520.

and considered them as children who should be kept under perpetual tutelage.

XXXIV. Notwithstanding all these circumstances, which alienated the persons in Hispaniola, to whom Las Casas applied, from himself and his measures, he by his activity and perseverance, by some concessions and many threats, obtained at length a small body of troops to protect him and his colony at their first landing. But on his return to Porto Rico, he found that the diseases of the climate had been fatal to several of his people; and that others, having got employment in that island, refused to follow him. With the handful that remained, he sailed for Cumana. Ocampo had executed his commission in that province with such barbarous rage, having massacred many of the inhabitants, sent others in chains to Hispaniola, and forced the rest to fly for shelter to the woods, that the people of a small colony planted by him at a place he called *Toledo*, were ready to perish for want in a desolated country. There, however, Las Casas was obliged to fix his residence, though deserted by the troops appointed to protect him, and by those under the command of Ocampo, who foresaw and dreaded the calamities to which he must be exposed in that wretched situation. He made the best provision in his power for the safety and subsistence of his followers; but as his utmost efforts availed little towards securing either the one or the other, he returned to Hispaniola, in order to solicit more effectual aid for the preservation of men, who from confidence in him had assumed a post of so much danger. Soon after his departure, the natives having discovered the feeble and defenceless state of the Spaniards, assembled secretly, attacked them with the fury natural to men exasperated by many injuries, cut off many, and compelled the rest to fly in the utmost consternation to

the island of Cubagua. The small colony settled there on account of the pearl fishery, catching the panic with which their countrymen had been seized, abandoned the island, and not a Spaniard remained in any part of the continent or adjacent islands. from the gulf of Paria to the borders of Darien. Astonished at such a succession of disasters, and overwhelmed with mortification at this fatal termination of his splendid schemes, Las Casas shut himself up in the convent of the Dominicans, at St. Domingo, and soon after assumed the habit of that order.\*

Departing from the chronological order of our work, we have thus given a succinct history of the efforts of Las Casas to soften and improve the condition of the Indian race: efforts which in the present age would have placed him by the side of Clarkson, Wilberforce, and other distinguished philanthropists. It must not, however, be forgotten, that he was only the advocate, the *protector* of the Indians; not the enemy of slavery in all its forms, nor the friend of universal emancipation. But these are principles which that age was incapable of entertaining; which have slowly expanded with the progress of letters and religion, and are still unacknowledged in a great part of the globe. Yet the good priest is entitled to a niche in the small temple devoted to men who have zealously, courageously, and disinterestedly applied their whole faculties to promote the happiness of their fellow-beings.

XXXV. It will be recollected that the admiral, in consequence of the indignities and vexations which he received from the royal officers at Hispaniola, had resolved to return to Europe. Having

\* A. D. 1521. Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5. Dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 3, 4, 5. Oviedo, Hist. lib. xix. c. 5. Gomara, c. 77. Davila Padilla, lib. i. c. 97. Remisal, Hist. Gen. lib. xi. c. 22, 23.

procured the permission of the king, he arrived at San Lucar on the 9th April, 1515, leaving the vice-queen, and the adelantado, at St. Domingo. He was favourably received by his majesty, who, upon investigation, was thoroughly satisfied with his conduct, and directed that all processes which had been brought against him in the courts of appeal, or elsewhere, for damages to individuals, in regulating the *repartimientos*, should be discontinued, and the cases sent to himself for consideration. But he showed himself now, as at all times, averse to intrusting the Columbi with the powers and dignities which they justly claimed, and equally unwilling to pay them the revenues stipulated in the capitulations of the first admiral. Don Diego demanded his share of the profits derived from the provinces of *Castilla del Oro*, which had been discovered by his father. And though the fact of discovery was notorious, the king pretended to doubt it; and for the purpose of delay, directed interrogatories to be put to the mariners, who had sailed with Don Christopher Columbus, now scattered among the West India islands.\*

XXXVI. Long before the termination of a suit thus vexatiously delayed, king Ferdinand died. Nor could Diego obtain a hearing from his successor for several years. The regent Ximenes refused to take upon himself the decision of so important a question. At length in the year 1520, just before the departure of Charles for Germany, to assume the imperial crown, he determined the rights of Columbus with many other important matters which were pressed in mass upon his attention. The accusations got up by Passamonte and his confederates, were recognized as notorious calumnies, and the admiral was commanded to resume his

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. 1. c. 5.



charge. His powers of viceroy and governor in Hispaniola, and in all the countries discovered by his father, were acknowledged, and letters were addressed to Passamonte, commanding him to bury in oblivion all past differences, and to preserve a cordial correspondence with Don Diego; a command which the royal treasurer was particularly careful *not* to obey. General instructions were also given to the admiral for the discharge of his duties, and that his dependence might be preserved, an officer was appointed by the title of *Pesquisidor*, with instructions to observe his conduct and to report thereon to the king in council; and resident judges were also nominated to pass upon cases in which his officers were parties. He sailed for St. Domingo in September, 1520. On his arrival, finding that several of the governors of the dependent islands had arrogated independence, and had abused their powers, he immediately superseded them, and demanded an account of their administration. A measure which made him a host of active and powerful enemies both in the colonies and in Spain.

XXXVII. Great changes had taken place in the island of Hispaniola, in the absence of the admiral. Not long after his departure, his uncle, Don Bartholomew, died at a very advanced age. He had remained long inactive, though his skill and genius might have been usefully employed by the crown; but it is said that Ferdinand was unwilling to give a further opportunity of aggrandizing a family which he considered as already too powerful. On his death, the king resumed the island of Mona, which had been given to him for life, and transferred his *repartimiento* of Indians to the vice-queen Donna Maria.\* The mines had fallen into neglect, the cultivation of the sugar-cane having been found

\* 1 Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 10. c. 16. Ib. Dec. 3. lib. 4. c. 9. 3 Irv. Col. p. 224. A. D. 1522.

a more certain source of wealth. It became a by-word in Spain, that the magnificent palaces erected by Charles V. at Madrid and Toledo were built of the sugar of Hispaniola. Slaves were imported in great numbers from Africa—whose treatment was cruel in the extreme, and who, in this respect, less fortunate than the Indians, found no advocates. The inferiority of nature, the great reason assigned by the interested for the maintenance of Indian slavery, was urged against the negroes with more vehemence, and without contradiction. The barbarities inflicted on them, roused them to revenge, and produced, on the 27th December, 1522, the first African revolt in Hispaniola. It began on a sugar plantation of the admiral, where, about twenty slaves, joined by an equal number from a neighbouring plantation, got possession of arms, rose on their superintendents, massacred them, and sallied forth upon the country. They proposed to pillage certain plantations, to kill the whites, reinforce themselves by liberating their countrymen, and either to possess themselves of the town of Agua, or to make for the mountains. The revolt was suppressed by Don Diego without difficulty, the insurgents being pursued to their hiding-places, dragged thence, and hung on the nearest trees. This prompt severity checked all further attempts at revolt among the African slaves.\*

XXXVIII. An insurrection of the Indians in the year preceding the return of the admiral was more successful and more durable : and merits to be narrated on account of the evidence it affords, of the improvable character of the natives, and that the feebleness of their minds and bodies was caused solely by their inactive life, which required little exercise of either. An Indian, named Enriquez,

\* 1 Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 10. c. 16. Ib. Dec. 3. lib. 4. c. 9. 3 Irv. Col. p. 224. A. D. 1522.

the son of a Cacique, had been bred and educated by the Franciscan monks established in the town of *Verapaz*, in the province of Xaragua. At the age of manhood, he returned to his people, having been taught to read and to write, and instructed fully in the religion and manners of the Spaniards. He married, according to the laws of the church, an Indian girl of distinguished lineage, named *Donna Mencia*. His tribe, and himself as its head, owed service by *repartimiento* to a young Spaniard called Valenzuela, to whom they had fallen by inheritance. With the usual wantonness and injustice of his countrymen, Valenzuela robbed Enriquez of a favourite mare, and violated the person of his wife; and threatened the injured man, who had the hardihood to complain, with chastisement by the lash. The outraged Enriquez applied for redress to the lieutenant-governor of the province, who, indignant that a slave should dare to accuse his master, also threatened him with castigation and imprisonment. Still, in his simplicity, the Cacique could not believe that the justice which he had probably been taught, was an attribute of Christianity, could not be found among its professors, and he carried his complaints to the audience at St. Domingo. But he found the judges too much engrossed with the advancement of their own interests, to attend to so ordinary a matter as the oppression of an Indian, and they discharged their consciences of the affair, by giving him a letter recommending his case to the same lieutenant, by whom he had been already dismissed. He met with new indignities from the judge, and fresh injuries from his master.

Enriquez smothered his indignation at this treatment, until the period of his service, which comprized certain months of the year only, had passed. He then retired to his home, situated in a rough

country, impracticable for horse, in the mountains of Baoruco, fifty leagues from St. Domingo, where he threw off the yoke of his master, with a fixed determination never to resume it; and his handful of Indians nobly resolved to share his fate. When the season of labour returned, and the Cacique and his tribe did not appear, Valenzuela, with an armed party of eleven Spaniards, set forth to drag them to their toil, and punish them for their sedition. But the Indians were prepared to receive them, and armed with lances pointed with spikes and fish-bones, with bows, arrows, and stones, they boldly rushed to the encounter. Enriquez advancing, addressed Valenzuela, and bade him return, for that neither he nor his people would accompany him. But the latter, who made light of Indian hostility, calling him dog, and using other terms of abuse, immediately charged upon him. The Indians fought courageously, slew two of the Spaniards, and the rest being wounded took to flight. Enriquez forbade pursuit, but calling out to his former master, said, "Be thankful, Valenzuela, that we do not slay you. Go, and do not return hither, or beware of us." The rebellion was soon known throughout the island; the Audiencia dispatched a force of seventy or eighty men to subdue him; who, after a weary search of many days, discovered and engaged him, but were defeated, and driven back, with considerable loss in killed and wounded.

This success increased the force of Enriquez from less than one hundred to more than three hundred men, to whom he taught the use of the Castilian arms, and modes of warfare. His policy was altogether defensive; for which he had a double motive, a desire to spare the effusion of blood, and the fear of exposing himself, by quitting the mountains, to the attacks of a disproportionate force. With a forbearance most strongly contrasted with

the conduct of his enemies, he commanded his Indians never to slay a Spaniard but in self-defence, but to possess themselves of the Spanish arms wherever they could obtain them. In one instance only, his commands were disobeyed: his outposts mistaking some travellers for spies, killed them, and captured fifteen or twenty thousand dollars in gold. In a short time his Indians became so expert in the use of all the Spanish weapons, except the arquebus, that they engaged their enemies man to man with equal advantage. The vigilance of the chief never slept. Guards and sentinels were placed at every spot by which the enemy might enter his country; and when the Spaniards were known to be in the vicinity, he removed the aged, the women, the children, and all non-combatants, to secret places in the mountains, where he had plantations and stores of provisions prepared, leaving a guard, under his nephew, a stripling distinguished for his courage, to hold the Spaniards in check. If the enemy advanced, the Indians gave them battle; and Enriquez, by the skilful use of his reserve, obtained the victory in every encounter. He took his rest in the early part of the night, watched by two pages armed with spears and swords; after which he rose, counted his beads, and sent his rosary throughout the camp. His other measures for security displayed much forecast. He maintained several plantations dispersed over a space of thirty or forty leagues, at which he alternately bivouacked his little army. And the better to conceal his position, his dogs and fowls were kept at a distance from the main body, that it might not be betrayed by their cries. When he sent out a party to hunt or fish, he immediately shifted his camp, so that if any of them were taken by the enemy, they were unable to give definite information of his place of refuge. His prudence and courage, struck terror



into the Spaniards, and they marched reluctantly against a foe who was rarely visible, and at all times invincible.

Other Caciques were stimulated by his example to cast away their chains, and to retort the manifold injuries they endured. Ziguayo, a distinguished chief of a noted tribe called *Ziguayos*, inhabiting the hills northward of the Royal Vega, collected a few desperate associates, with whom he harassed a wide extent of country; attacking the miners, the hamlets, and country houses, and slaying, without mercy, every Spaniard who fell into his hands, until the fame of his cruelties spread terror over the whole island. His career, however, was short. He was wanting in the ability as in the magnanimity of Enriquez; and he suffered himself to be surprized by a troop of Spaniards, who slew him and captured his followers. But this band was scarce subdued, before another appeared, under a valiant Indian, Tamayo, who pursued a like vengeful course, and would probably have shared a like fate as Ziguayo, had not Enriquez, who condemned and deplored his cruelties, attached him to his own party, thereby protecting him, and relieving the country from his merciless forays.

But the dread alone of Indian hostility, now become formidable, depopulated the adjacent districts, and occasioned, during several years, much anxiety and expense to the government. In 1519, one of the friars, by whom Enriquez had been educated, was sent to him with offers of accommodation, but the heroic Cacique, recapitulating the wrongs which his nation and himself had suffered, and contrasting his own forbearance and humanity with the cruelty of his oppressors, declared that he knew the Spaniards too well to confide in them.

For ten years, every effort to reduce him to submission, by force or negotiation, was alike unsuc-



cessful. At length, in 1529, Hernandez de San Miguel, who came to the island when a boy, with the first admiral, and who was well acquainted with the manners of the Indians and their modes of warfare, as well as with the passes of the mountains, undertook, at the head of one hundred and fifty men, to hunt down the prudent insurgent. After a pursuit of many days, during which the chieftain easily baffled the pursuer, Enriquez gave him an interview, in a spot which he selected for the purpose. Two mountain peaks arose precipitously to a great height near to each other, yet separated by a profound chasm, through which flowed a deep and rapid stream. Upon these summits, in mid air, where the warriors could hear but not approach each other, they opened a conference, in which terms of peace were proposed by San Miguel, and accepted by Enriquez; the former exhibiting full powers from the government for this purpose. It was stipulated, that the chief and his followers might dwell in full freedom and independence, in such part of the island as they might select, refraining from all violence to the Spaniards, and restoring the gold which had been taken from certain travellers, as we have already mentioned. Time and place were appointed, at which the parties should meet, accompanied each by eight attendants, for the delivery of the gold and the ratification of the treaty. Enriquez repaired to the place, on the sea shore, and erected a bower, in which he placed the gold, and provisions for both parties. San Miguel too kept the appointment; and that he might better celebrate the peace, he caused a vessel which *accidentally* appeared on the coast to be moored near the shore, whilst the crew marched in procession, to the sound of musical instruments. The chief beholding this numerous force approach, whose good faith he had but too much reason to

doubt, retired to his fastnesses, commanding his attendants to receive the Spaniards with cordiality, to deliver up the treasure, and to say that indisposition prevented him from keeping his engagement in person. San Michael regretted much that the conclusion of the treaty should be thus postponed; but more, perhaps, that he had failed to carry Enriquez in chains to St. Domingo. He sent him, however, a friendly message; and the truce, though not formally ratified, was preserved unbroken for four years, when a permanent treaty was concluded, by which the intrepid chieftain accomplished the freedom and independence of himself and his tribe.\*

XXXIX. About the period of the Viceroy's return to St. Domingo,† some attention was given to the reduction and colonization of other islands in the West Indies. The licentiate, Antonio de Serrano, an inhabitant of St. Domingo, accompanied the admiral from Spain, with authority to colonize the island of Guadaloupe; bearing also the commission of governor of the islands of Montserrat, Barbadoes, Antigua, Desseada, Dominica, and Martinique, all lying near Guadaloupe, and forming part of the group commonly known as the Carib Islands. He was well provided with means to render his delegated power effectual, but he appears to have made little or no use of them.‡

\* Herrera.

† 1520.

‡ Herrera, Dec. 11. lib. 9. c. vii.

## CHAPTER II.

- I. *Efforts for the exploration of the American continent.*...II. *Voyage of Solis and Pinzon.*...
- III. *Terms of grants made to Ojeda and Nicuesa.*...
- IV. *Singular instructions given to Ojeda and Nicuesa.*...
- V. *Unfortunate attempt of Ojeda at Carthagena.*...
- VI. *Relieved by Nicuesa, and proceeds to the gulf of Uraba.*...
- VII. *Misfortunes there.*...
- VIII. *Ojeda returns to Hispaniola for aid. His death.*...
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- X. *Loses his vessel—his great sufferings.*...
- XI. *Settles at Nombre de Dios.*...
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HAVING, in the preceding chapter, noticed the chief events connected with the history of the islands of the New World previous to the year 1520, we shall, in the present, trace the progress of Spanish enterprize upon the continent until the commencement of the conquests of Mexico and Peru. Each of those great events merits separate consideration.

I. We have already remarked, that the rich returns from Hispaniola, induced Ferdinand to bestow his attention on further discoveries.\* Since the last voyage of Columbus, no effort had been made to explore and colonize the wealthy countries he had visited on the continent. The most experienced navigators were now summoned to court, among whom were John Diaz de Solis, Vincent Yanez Pinzon, John de la Coza, and Americus

\* A. D. 1508.

Vespucius ; by whose advice the king resolved to explore more fully the coasts of Brazil, and to colonize the shores of the continent of the isthmus westward of Paria. The former enterprize was committed to Solis and Pinzon, whilst the latter was undertaken by De la Cosa, Nicuesa, Ojeda, and others. The science and experience of Vespucius, procured for him a more honourable and important commission. He was established at Seville, with the title of Chief Pilot, and charged with making sea charts, and the general direction of the navigation to the Indies. From the close connexion which this office gave him with the principal affairs of the New World, it has been supposed, that he obtained the honour of giving it his name, an honour justly due to Columbus only.\*

II. Two caravels were supplied for the Brazilian voyage. The expedition, whilst at sea, was under the command of Solis ; but when employed on land, was subject to the orders of Pinzon. This unwise division of authority marred the enterprize. The vessels sailed by the Cape de Verd islands directly to Cape St. Augustine, and thence, coasted the continent to the 40th degree of south latitude. The Spaniards landed frequently, erected crosses, and took possession of the country in the most solemn manner. Upon their return, an inquiry was instituted under the direction of the *Casa de Contraction*, or Board of Trade, into the merits of the dispute between the commanders. Solis being found in the wrong, was committed to prison, but Pinzon was rewarded by the king.†

III. Although earnestly desirous to gain a permanent footing on the continent, it was no part of Ferdinand's policy to supply funds for that pur-

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 7. c. 1.

† Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 7. ch. 9. A. D. 1508.



pose. Nor was such aid necessary; the privileges, in the new countries, which he offered to successful adventurers, being a sufficient inducement to enterprize. Ojeda readily tendered his services; and though poor, his character and experience gained him a partner in Juan de la Cosa, who advanced the requisite money. Diego de Nicuesa, who had accompanied Ovando to Hispaniola, and had there acquired a large fortune, also formed the design of establishing himself on Terra Firma. The king erected two governments on the continent. One extending from Cape de Vela to the bay of Uraba, or gulf of Darien, was called New Andalusia, and allotted to Ojeda; the other, reaching from the gulf of Darien to cape *Gracias a Dios*, was named Golden Castile, (*Castilla del Oro*) and granted to Nicuesa; and to both, permission was given to draw provisions from Jamaica. The conditions of these grants were,—that each grantee should erect two forts within his government; that he should possess the mines he might discover, paying to the king, for the first year, one-tenth of the product, and gradually and annually increasing the royal portion, until it reached one-fifth; that he might freight vessels and obtain provisions at Hispaniola; might grant a free passage for two hundred men from Spain, and six hundred from that island; that he should exhibit all the gold obtained by purchase or otherwise to the king's officers; that he and his associates should be free from taxes for four years; paying to the crown, during the first, one-fifth, and during the three others, one-fourth of their gains; that the settlers in the government might return to Spain, and sell their estates; that each commander might procure from Hispaniola forty Indians skilled in seeking gold, who might not only exercise, but teach others, their art; and, finally, that neither should carry out persons not subjects of Spain, and

who had not entered into obligations before the bishop Fonseca to fulfil their capitulations. Juan de la Cosa was appointed the lieutenant of Ojeda, and received the office of chief Alguazil, with survivorship to his son.\*

IV. The instructions given to Ojeda and Nicuesa were of the most extraordinary character; and as they contain a formal exposition of the Spanish right to the possession of the islands and continent of America, richly merit our attention. These commanders were required, as servants of the kings of Castile and Leon, the conquerors of barbarous nations, to declare to the Indians, that God, one and eternal, had created the heavens and the earth, and one man and one woman, from whom *they* and all men were descended. But as, during the long period of more than five thousand years, the human race had, because one country could not contain them, been scattered over the face of the globe, God had given absolute authority over the whole to one man, named St. Peter, whom he commanded to reside at Rome, and to bear the name of Pope, which signifies admirable, great father, and guardian; and that this power had been continued to his successors, and would be so continued to the end of the world: that one of these popes had granted to the Catholic king Ferdinand, and to his queen Isabella, and their successors, all the islands and continents of the ocean sea, as was fully expressed in certain deeds, which they would exhibit, if requested: that most of the islands, where his title had been declared, had recognized it, and had obeyed the religious men sent by the king to instruct the inhabitants in his holy faith; who, having become Christians, were received under his most gracious protection, and were treated like his

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 7. c. 6, 7. A. D. 1508.

other subjects and vassals. The commanders were also instructed, to proclaim to the nations of *Terra Firma*, that they also were bound to like obedience; and that if, after due time for reflection, they acknowledged the supremacy of the church, the pope in his own right, and his majesty by appointment, as the sovereign lord of all these countries, and consented to receive the holy doctrines of the Catholic religion, his majesty would extend to them his love, and would leave their wives and children free from servitude, and themselves in the enjoyment of all they possessed, in the *same manner as he had done to the inhabitants of the islands*; and would bestow upon them many other privileges, exemptions, and rewards. But that, in case of refusal or malicious delay to obey these injunctions, he would enter their country with the horrors of war, subject the inhabitants to the yoke of the church and crown, carry them, their wives, and children into slavery, and do them all the mischief possible, as rebellious subjects. And that all the bloodshed and calamities which might follow should be imputed, not to his majesty or his agents, but to their own disobedience. Orders were also given, that the making of this proclamation should be certified in due form.\*

Shall we admire most the justice of this manifesto, the strength of the title which it sets forth, or the grave adherence to municipal form which attended its proclamation? Had the Indians known the language of the proclamation, had they understood the nature of the services demanded of them, they must have deemed the prince most gracious and most worthy of obedience, who mercifully and disinterestedly proffered to them, the unburthened denizens of the forest, the enjoyment of liberty,

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 7. c. 14.

and full participation of the blessings showered on the new-made Christians of Hispaniola. Such, three centuries ago, were the absurdities to which kings, princes, bishops, soldiers, and scholars lent themselves, in the most enlightened countries of Europe.

V. Juan de la Cosa having fitted out one ship and two brigantines, sailed with about two hundred men for St. Domingo; whither Ojeda had preceded him; and had engaged Martin Fernandez Enciso, a rich lawyer of the island, to follow him with provision, and to accept the commission of his alcade mayor. Nicuesa sailed soon after, with six vessels, taking the island of Santa Cruz in his way, where he seized above a hundred Indians, whom he sold for slaves, alleging that he had the king's license for this act, because they were cannibals. Among the enterprizing spirits engaged by Ojeda, were Francisco Pizarro and Hernando Cortes, who soon after filled the world with their fame. The former accompanied the expedition, but the latter was prevented from embarking by illness. Ojeda arrived in a few days at Carthagena, called by the Indians *Caramarri*. The natives met him in arms, having been provoked to hostility by the injuries they had received from Christopher Guerra, and others, who had lately visited their shores. In vain did the notary proclaim the well-deduced right of Ferdinand to their allegiance, the pious priest explain the doctrines of his faith, or the merchant tempt by his seductive commerce. The knowledge which the Indians had gained of their European visitors, rendered them firm in their determination to preserve their independence; and they replied to all these instances, by their arrows tinged with poison, which were delivered with equal force and bravery by both sexes. De la Cosa proposed to remove their colony to the mouth of the Uraba, in the gulf

of Darien, where the inhabitants were of milder temperament. But Ojeda, daring and rash, and superstitiously presuming on his good fortune, which had conducted him unscathed through many a battle with Moor and Indian, preferred recourse to the alternative given in the royal instructions. His first efforts were attended with the usual success of the Spaniards in Indian conflicts. The natives were destroyed by fire and sword, driven from their villages, or reduced to captivity. But the confidence of the victors led to negligence; and whilst Ojeda and De la Cosa, at the head of seventy men, were seeking the enemy in a careless and scattered manner, they were assailed by an overwhelming force, and the former, and a private soldier, were the only persons of this party who escaped with life. De la Cosa was pierced with darts, which bristled his body like that of a porcupine. The shield of Ojeda was marked with three hundred arrows which he had received upon it, and he was found, by a party from the ships, faint and exhausted, concealed among the mangroves on the sea shore.\*

VI. From this critical state he was relieved by the arrival of Nicuesa, with seven ships and between seven and eight hundred men. Forgetting instantly a quarrel which he had had with Ojeda at St. Domingo, relative to the boundaries of their governments, this commander offered his forces to seek instant vengeance on the natives. Mounted on horseback, the two leaders, followed by four hundred men instructed to give no quarter, surprized the town of Yurbaco, reduced it to ashes, and massacred the whole of the inhabitants. Ojeda having obtained a large plunder here, proceeded to the gulf of Uraba, where, after a fruitless search for the river Darien, said by the Indians to abound in

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 8. c. 15. A. D. 1510.

gold, he planted the town of San Sabastian, and dispatched one of his vessels to Saint Domingo, to advise Enciso of his position, to secure the treasure and slaves he had captured, and to obtain supplies of provision and ammunition, and a reinforcement of men.\*

VII. Having erected a fortress, and placed a garrison therein, he led the rest of his people into the neighbouring rich and populous district of Tirufi, which was governed by an active, courageous, and vigilant chief, who not only drove the Spaniards back, but besieged them in the fort, where famine inflicted on them the severest sufferings. They were relieved from the most imminent danger of starvation, by the arrival of a vessel from Hispaniola, commanded by Bernardin de Talavera, a man of desperate fortunes, who, excited by the booty sent by Ojeda, had stolen her from Cape Tiburon, when laden with provisions for St. Domingo, and had manned her with seventy men as reckless as himself. This relief was temporary only; and it became necessary to make frequent sallies to procure food. In one of these, the hitherto invulnerable Ojeda fell into an ambush, and was wounded by a poisoned arrow, which passed through his thigh. He became dejected upon this misfortune, believing immediate death inevitable; yet with resolute spirit he caused the actual cautery to be applied to his wound, and though reduced by violent fever, he eventually was restored to health. The men who had hitherto borne their misfortunes patiently, now openly proclaimed their discontent; accused Ojeda of appropriating to himself an undue portion of their provisions, and resolved to seize on the brigantines, and depart for Hispaniola. This measure was prevented only by the proposal

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 16. A. D. 1510.



of Ojeda to return himself to St. Domingo for aid, in the vessel of Talavera, and in case he should be detained longer than fifty days, that the colonists might abandon the expedition. The command of the garrison was given to Pizarro, until he should be relieved by Enciso, whose arrival was hourly expected. Ojeda embarked with the crew of Talavera, who though obnoxious to the severest penalties of the law, chose rather to expose themselves to any fate in St. Domingo, than to share that of the adventurers of New Andalusia.

VIII. Ojeda was pursued in this voyage by misfortunes, and the evils flowing from his impetuous temper. He was scarce at sea, when he quarrelled with Talavera for the command of the ship; and that officer was compelled to confine him, that he might preserve subordination. Being opposed by adverse winds and currents, and unable to reach Hispaniola, they put into Cuba. The once peaceful and hospitable natives had learned to dread the white man's approach, and instead of ministering to his wants, sought to expel him from the shore. To keep the sea without provisions was impossible, and therefore the Spaniards resolved to make their way by land in the direction of Hispaniola. The toils and perils of this journey are scarce surpassed in any of the laborious enterprizes of the Europeans in America. After a march of a hundred leagues, they entered a marsh, into which they sunk knee-deep at every step. Presuming that it was not extensive, they continued their route, but the marsh grew wider and deeper, and at length, after eight days of incredible suffering, from hunger, thirst, and exposure to the rays of the sun, and the chills of the night, they found themselves in the centre of a bog, where the water reached above their waists. The spirit of Ojeda encouraged and sustained his less etherial companions. He con-

fided in the protection of the Virgin, to whom he was devoted, and whose picture, given to him by the bishop Fonseca, he constantly carried about him. When he stopped to repose among the roots of the mangrove trees, he hung the picture from the branches, and kneeling before it, called upon his followers to join him in his adorations. Full thirty days were employed in crossing this morass, which was thirty leagues in extent. At length thirty-five of the seventy men who had left the ship, reached the fast land, and an Indian village; the remainder had perished by famine, were drowned in crossing the streams which impeded their way, or were suffocated in the mud. The survivors were indebted for their lives to the humanity of the Indians, who supplied them with food. Ojeda also obtained from them a canoe, by which he was enabled to communicate with Juan de Esquivel, in Jamaica. It was the fortune of Ojeda to make enemies by his violent temper, and to be punished by the pardon of those he had injured. He had threatened Esquivel with death, should he settle in Jamaica; and he was now to receive from him the means of his own preservation. A caravel brought the desponding Spaniards from Cuba to Jamaica, whence Ojeda returned to St. Domingo. Talavera, dreading the punishment due to his offences, did not venture thither; but he did not escape the vengeance of the law. The admiral, Don Diego Columbus, soon after caused him to be taken and hanged. The remnant of Ojeda's history is shortly told. He spent several months vainly soliciting his countrymen for means to re-establish his colony. He narrowly escaped assassination, by his activity and skill in the use of his sword, having been assailed by several enemies at once. But he soon after died a natural death; and being destitute of means to pay the expense of his funeral, his body

was buried by his direction at the door of the Franciscan monastery.

IX. Before we return to the colony at St. Sebastian, it will be proper to follow Nicuesa through the scenes of his eventful fortune. After the sack of Yurbaco, he directed his course for Veragua. Selecting a light caravel for himself, and two brigantines adapted for running along shore, he took with him his lieutenant Lope de Olano, who had been an active partisan and apt disciple of Roldan, and commanded that the remainder of the squadron should keep out at sea. Near the place of their destination, and during a violent storm, Olano, with the brigantines, accidentally or designedly parted from the caravel. He sought the ships, which being too much worm-eaten to keep the ocean, had entered the river Chagre, and landed their cargoes. He gave out that Nicuesa had foundered in the tempest, from which he had himself miraculously escaped; and assuming the absolute command of the expedition, led it to the mouth of the river Belen, four leagues from Veragua; leaving the ships at a point of land where they were exposed to the storms so common to the coast. They soon became rotten, and were broken up afterwards by the Spaniards. Huts for temporary protection having been erected, the shores of the sea, and the river Veragua, were explored for a proper site on which to establish the colony. Meanwhile the adventurers, disgusted with the expedition, were visited by the diseases of the climate, and were finally overtaken by famine. Many perished. The survivors were saved from desperation by the construction of a caravel from the timbers of the decayed ships, in which Olano falsely declared his intention to return to Hispaniola.

X. Nicuesa, no longer perceiving the brigantines, supposed them to have been swallowed up

by the waves, and running his vessel for the shore, entered a river then swollen by the rains. In a few hours the torrent subsiding, left the caravel stranded on the bar, where she soon went to pieces. Her crew escaped in the most destitute condition. The commander, followed by his people, set forth in the boat to seek his way to Veragua, along the sea-shore, exposed to fatigue, famine, and the hostility of the natives, and without any definite idea of the situation of the place which he sought. In their passage across a large bay, the adventurers landed upon a desert island. Four seamen, in whose charge the boat had been left, becoming hopeless of relief by other means, resolved to leave their companions, and seek the ships, which they believed to be still on the coast. Fortunately, they retraced their steps, and continued their route to the westward; and after escaping many dangers, discovered Olano and his party, to whom they communicated the unwelcome tidings of the existence of their commander and his wretched companions. A brigantine, with such provisions as could be spared from a scanty store, was dispatched to their relief; but many had already perished, and the survivors were so weak as to be unable to stand erect. Immediately on his arrival, Nicuesa charged Olano with treachery, and ordered him into confinement, designing to send him to Spain for trial; and believing that those who obeyed his orders were implicated in his crime, he treated them with great severity. The difficulty in procuring food was much increased by this addition of consumers; and to such dire extremity were the adventurers reduced, that a party of thirty, who were seeking provisions, finding the dead and putrid body of an Indian, instantly devoured it. So noxious was this horrible repast, that every one died immediately after partaking of it.

XI. Nicuesa resolved to seek some more propitious spot on which to establish his colony, leaving some men to await here the maturity of the crops of maize and other vegetables, now almost ripe, which the Spaniards had sown. Guided by a sailor, who had been on the coast with Columbus, he reached Porto-Bello; but he was driven thence by the natives, who slew twenty of his feeble and emaciated followers. He landed again at a port a few leagues distant, where, worn out with misfortune, he exclaimed, "*Paremos aqui en el nombre de Dios.*" "Let us settle here in the name of God." From this circumstance, the port, called by the natives *Chuchureyes*, and by Columbus de *Bastimientos*, received the name of *Nombre de Dios*, which it has since borne.

XII. Formal possession having been taken of this spot, a fort was erected, and other measures adopted for the security of the colonists, reduced by fatigue, famine, and pestilence to one hundred men, including the survivors of those who had been left at Belen, and who were now brought away. During five months, these had been exposed to the extremities of hunger, and escaped death by a fortunate suggestion of one of their companions, to make bread of the grated palmetto, after the manner in which the Cassava was used in Hispaniola. The united adventurers persevered in their purpose of establishing a colony, under the most discouraging circumstances. Their supply of food continued precarious, and was chiefly derived from the plunder of the natives, with whom they carried on incessant hostilities. Many Indian prisoners were sent to Hispaniola as slaves, by a vessel which Nicuesa dispatched for a store of bacon, which he had directed to be prepared before his departure. But he was not suffered to enjoy the fruits of his providential care; the admiral, who sought to pre-

vent the colonization of the continental countries discovered by his father, prohibiting the exportation of the provisions. At length the unfortunate colonists were reduced to such a state of weakness, that not one was able to stand sentinel at night, and a speedy death was pending over all.

XIII. We now return to the colony planted by Ojeda, at St. Sebastian, which, at his departure for St. Domingo, consisted of sixty men. Having patiently awaited the allotted fifty days for his return, they determined to abandon the settlement: but as all could not be transported in the brigantines, the only vessels remaining to them, they resolved to abide until famine, or the poisoned arrows of the Indians, had sufficiently reduced their number. They did not wait long. Having killed and salted four mares, the remnant of their stock, they embarked, Pizarro commanding one, and Valenzuela the other of the vessels. They had scarce put to sea, when the latter foundered, and every soul on board perished. Pizarro sailed for Carthagena, and was rejoiced on entering the port, to find it occupied by Enciso with a ship and brigantine, having on board one hundred and fifty men, and a large stock of provisions, and animals for breed. With Enciso came out Basco Nunez de Balboa, to whom Spain was afterwards much indebted for acquisitions on the isthmus. His circumstances in Hispaniola had grown desperate, and he fled secretly from his creditors. Whilst at Carthagena, the Indians, who had suffered from the vengeance of Ojeda and Nicuesa, gathered around Enciso and his followers with demonstrations of hostility. But when satisfied that the new comers were strangers, who had no part in the infliction of the injuries they had sustained, they cast aside their weapons, received their visitors as honoured guests, and supplied them abundantly with maize, salted fish, and



the fermented liquors common along the coast. Enciso compelled the reluctant Pizarro and his companions to return with him to St. Sebastian; but as if every effort to colonize this spot was destined to fail, Enciso's ship was wrecked as she entered the bay, and the chief portion of her lading, including the animals, was lost. The crew was saved in the brigantines. Upon landing, the adventurers discovered that their fort had been burned, their improvements wasted, and that the Indians, grown confident by success, shrunk from no disparity of force. All clamourously insisted upon abandoning a spot so unpropitious; and by the advice and under the conduct of Balboa, who had been on the coast with Bastides, they proceeded to the river Darien, on the western side of the bay. Here they found abundance of provisions, and a valuable booty in cotton and gold,\* in an Indian village, the inhabitants of which they had expelled.

XIV. The Spaniards immediately proceeded to establish their colony, giving to it the name of *Santa Maria el Antigua del Darien*. But the irregular and stirring ambition which haunted most persons engaged in these new and exciting scenes, soon involved them in contention. Enciso exercised his authority with rigour, especially in enforcing, under the pain of death, the royal prohibition against trading with the natives on private account. The murmurs of the adventurers on this occasion, who accused him of a design to appropriate to himself all the profits of the expedition, gave Balboa an opportunity to resist, and finally to overthrow his power. He denied the authority of Enciso, on the ground that they were no longer within the government of Ojeda; and procured the adoption of a form of government similar to that of

\* Estimated at 10,000 castellanos—about 53,000 dollars of our present money

the towns of Spain; and his own election to the office of alcade. But he was not able to still the ferment he had excited; and whilst the little community was torn by several factions, it was joined by Rodrigo Enriques Colminares, who, with two ships and seventy men, were seeking Nicuesa along the coast. By distributing his provisions among the settlers, he obtained their consent to submit to the authority of Nicuesa, in whose territory they now were; and soon after discovering the position of that commander at *Nombre de Dios*, he transported him, and a part of his starving companions, to Santa Maria. But long suffering appears to have deprived Nicuesa of his wonted discretion. Instead of confirming his authority by gentle means, he assumed a tone of asperity, threatening to punish the colonists of Darien for intruding within his grant, and to strip them of the gold they had acquired. In return, they not only refused to recognize his authority, but declined to receive him among them on any terms; rejecting his prayer, that he might rather be detained as a prisoner, than sent to perish with hunger at *Nombre de Dios*. Obdurately persisting in their purpose, the colonists gave him a rotten brigantine, and compelled him, with seventeen of his followers, including his friends and servants, to depart from Darien, and to swear that he would make no delay until he presented himself before the king and council in Castile. It is probable that the vessel and her freight perished miserably at sea, no tidings having ever been heard of them.\* The severe treatment of Nicuesa was contrary to the advice and efforts of Basco Nuñez, who, though he had recommended his rejection as governor, commiserated his misfortunes, and would have saved him from the fierce

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 8. c. 8. A. D. 1510.

rage of the populace. He interfered boldly for this purpose ; and caused one of the most vociferous of the agitator's to be severely flagellated.

XV. Balboa being thus rid of Nicuesa, applied himself to expel Enciso likewise ; who, as the chief alcade of Ojeda, still claimed jurisdiction over the new colony. Upon the pretence that he had unlawfully assumed official powers, and that his commission was vacated by the death of Ojeda, Nunez subjected him to a form of trial, and seized his person and effects, but promised to liberate both, on condition that he would depart for Spain or Hispaniola, in the first vessel bound for either. Having freed himself from all competitors for the government of the colony, he resolved to apply to Don Diego Columbus for supplies of men and provisions, and to dispatch an agent to Spain to report his proceedings, and solicit a confirmation of his authority. Conscious that his conduct towards Nicuesa and Enciso might be inquired into and punished, he persuaded his associate, alcade Zamudio, to proceed with the latter to Spain ; and sent Valdibia, one of his regidores, to St. Domingo, with a rich present in gold to the treasurer, Passamonte, whose favour and influence with the king he well knew.

XVI. In the mean time, the natives of Darien, weary of their unbidden guests, and calculating that the same passions which brought them to their shores would tempt them to remove, represented, that the neighbouring district of Coyba was richer than that of Santa Maria, both in provisions and gold. Balboa sent Pizarro, with six men only, to explore the country. Whilst ascending the river, they were surrounded by four hundred Indians, commanded by the Cacique Zemaco, with whom the Spaniards unhesitatingly engaged ; and in a very short time slew one hundred and fifty, and wounded many others. All the Spaniards were se-

verely hurt, and one, dangerously wounded, was left on the field. The others retreated to Santa Maria. But Balboa, conceiving it to be a stain on his reputation that a living man should be thus abandoned, compelled Pizarro, with another party, to bring him off.

XVII. Nunez receiving no tidings of Nicuesa, whom he supposed would endeavour to regain *Nombre de Dios*, dispatched two brigantines to bring away the adventurers that had been left there. The vessels, on their return, entering the district of Coyba, were surprized by a visit from two Spaniards, stark naked and painted red, who, eighteen months before, had eloped from the squadron of Nicuesa, and had been kindly received by the Cacique Careta; one of them having been promoted to the command of his army, engaged in war with a neighbouring chieftain. Upon their representation that the country abounded in gold, and that its subjugation would enrich Nunez and all his followers, it was resolved that one of the vessels should remain at Coyba, whilst the other returned to Darien with the intelligence. Nunez did not rejoice more in this prospect of wealth than in the acquisition of interpreters, through whom he could communicate freely with the natives. He marched immediately, at the head of one hundred and thirty men, thirty leagues, to the residence of Careta; and the chief refusing to supply him with provisions, he attacked his town by night, killed and wounded many of the inhabitants, made prisoners of the Cacique, his wives, and children, and possessed himself of a large quantity of provisions, which he immediately sent to Darien. This severe lesson taught Careta to respect the power of the invaders, and induced him to form with them a league, offensive and defensive, which was confirmed by the delivery of his beautiful daughter to the

Spanish leader, who continued tenderly attached to her during life. The Cacique was not long in employing against his enemies, the weapons he had learned to dread; and he conducted the Spaniards into the country of Ponera, a rival chief, which they plundered, carrying off a large booty in grain and gold.

XVIII. Adjacent to Coyba, at the foot of a range of high mountains, lay the district of Comagre, governed by a Cacique of the same name, who, struck with admiration of the Spaniards, invited them into his territories, treated them with much hospitality, and displayed greater civilization than they had yet seen in the New World. His palace, one hundred and fifty paces in length, and eighty in breadth, was inclosed by a wall of timber of ingenious workmanship, and divided into convenient apartments, stored with abundance of provisions. One of these chambers was the receptacle of the dried and embalmed bodies of his ancestors, of many generations; which, clothed in mantles of cotton, embroidered with gold, pearls, and precious stones, were suspended from the walls.

The eldest son of the Cacique presented his guest with a rich offering of wrought gold, valued at four thousand pesos,\* and seventy slaves. A fifth of the metal was set apart for the king; but in the division of the remainder, a strife arose among the Christians, which surprized and provoked the young Indian. "If," said he, addressing the Spaniards, and indignantly striking over the balance, "if you are so fond of gold as for its sake to desert your own country and disturb the peace

\* Irving, *Voyages of the Companions of Columbus*, says, after Martyr, 4000 *ounces of gold*. This quantity is very improbable, and is inconsistent with the statement of Herrera, who writes, "Mando traer ciertas piezas de oro muy ricas en la hechura, y en la fineza; que tendrian quatro mil pesos & setenta esclavas."



of others, I will lead you to a province where your utmost desires may be gratified—where gold is more abundant than iron in Spain, and is used in the fabric of ordinary domestic utensils. But, to conquer this country, you must provide a larger force than you have here, since you will have to contend with mighty chieftains, who will vigorously defend their possessions. When you shall have passed those mountains,” continued he, pointing to a range in the southwest, “you will behold another ocean, on which are vessels inferior only to those which brought you hither, equipped with sails and oars, but navigated by a people naked like ourselves.”\* It is supposed that the young chief alluded to the people of Peru.

XIX. Balboa received with rapturous delight this first certain intimation of the existence of another ocean. He exulted in the hope of discovering the East Indies, which had been so dearly cherished by Columbus; and conjectured that the country now described to him, formed a part of that vast and opulent region. He immediately set about preparations for this great enterprize, cultivating the good will of Comagre and other chieftains; and administering to the former, and his sons, the rite of Christian baptism. He sent Valdibia again to St. Domingo, with fifteen thousand pesos in gold for the royal treasury, to solicit from the admiral such addition to his force, as might enable him to effect the desired conquest.

Valdibia was unfortunately shipwrecked on the coast of Jamaica, and himself and crew, consisting of twenty persons, were tossed by the winds and currents during thirteen days, suffering the extremity of hunger and thirst, which destroyed seven of their number. They were at length strand-

\* P. Martyr, Dec. 2. lib. 3. Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 9. c. 2.



ed on the eastern coast of Yucatan, in a province called Maya, where they were seized by the natives; he, and four of his companions, were soon after sacrificed to the bloody Gods of the country, and served up at a feast of the cannibal worshippers. The survivors escaped into a distant province, and perished miserably in slavery, two only excepted, who were taken into favour by their masters, and attained high consideration among their savage captors.\*

XX. In the mean time, Nunez employed himself in exploring the country, and reducing the neighbouring Caciques to subjection. He invaded the district of Dobayba, in the deserted villages of which he found considerable quantities of gold; but he lost the whole, and the canoes which carried it, upon his return. Upon a river which he named Negro, on account of the colour of the water, he discovered a town of five hundred houses, in the territories of the Cacique Abanemechy. The inhabitants fled at his approach, but turned upon their pursuers, and defended themselves valiantly with swords made of the palm-tree, and with spears hardened at the ends by fire. But the fiercest courage of naked barbarians, could not avail against the superior arms and discipline of their opponents. The Cacique, and many of his chief people, were made prisoners; and while disarmed, and under the protection of the general, a Spaniard whom he had wounded attacked the former, and, at a blow, struck off his arm. Following the course of the rivers, Balboa, at the distance of twenty leagues from the territories of Abanemechy, came to an extensive and marshy country, whose inhabitants built their dwellings in the trees, on account of the frequent inundations. In these the simple savages

\* Herrera, Dec. 2, lib. 4. ch. 7.

deemed themselves secure from every foe, and refused to submit themselves to the invader; but, when the Spanish axe was applied to the roots of their habitations, they were compelled to descend and beg for mercy. The several tribes, finding themselves unable singly to oppose the Spanish force, entered into a general combination, under the direction of the Cacique Zemaco, the persevering foe of the Spaniards, to expel the enemy; but they were defeated in the only battle which they offered. A conspiracy to surprize Darien, and assassinate the governor, was betrayed to Nunez, by an Indian woman who dwelt with him. The confederates were themselves surprized by his vigilance, and being engaged singly and conquered, the whole country submitted to his dominion.

XXI. Balboa, believing that the acquisitions he had now made were sufficiently important to gain him the favour of the king, proposed to return to Spain, to solicit more effectually the means of proceeding to the southern ocean. But the colonists, who justly considered him the chief stay of the settlement, opposing his departure, he dispatched Juan de Cayzado and Rodrigo Enriquez Colminares to court, for this purpose. They left Darien in October, 1512, and touching at Cuba and St. Domingo, arrived in Spain in May of the following year. Besides the king's fifth of the treasure collected, they carried with them a large contribution of gold from the settlers to his majesty; and also a native of the country of Zenu, who averred that he had seen a river, in which this precious metal was so abundant that it might be dragged forth with nets. The unquestionable evidences of wealth which the messengers exhibited, and the extravagant accounts they gave of the country which produced them, procured for it the name of Golden Castile, (Cas-

tilla del Oro,) instead of Andalusia, which it had first borne.\*

XXII. Soon after the departure of the agents, the colony was exposed to the most imminent danger from intestine commotion, caused by the insatiable avarice of its members. The gold, extracted by every possible mean from the natives, was impartially divided by Balboa; yet his justice was impeached by some, that they might have a pretence to seize on a fund of ten thousand castellanos, which had been reserved as a public stock for future contingencies. Two parties divided the colony, who were deterred from civil war only by the fear, that the Indians would fall on the weakened victor. The malcontents being most numerous, Nunez was compelled to withdraw from the town, in order to insure his personal safety; and the treasure was seized and divided. Fortunately, at this juncture, the long-expected reinforcements arrived from St. Domingo, with a commission from Passamonte appointing Balboa Captain-General. Although this authority was given in known violation of the rights of the admiral, it was not the less joyfully received, nor the less willingly obeyed. But the pleasure of Nunez, on this occasion, was not unmixed. Enciso had carried his complaints to the foot of the throne, and Balboa was commanded to repair his losses, to proceed immediately to court, and submit himself to the king's pleasure. He might therefore hourly expect a successor, to deprive him of the fame and wealth he anticipated from his intended enterprise. To prevent a calamity greatly deprecated by his ambitious spirit, he determined to effect the passage to the South Sea with the force then under his command.

XXIII. The isthmus of Darien is not above sixty

\* Herrera, Dec. 1 lib. 9.

miles in breadth, but a chain of lofty mountains, a continuation of the Andes, covered with almost impenetrable forests, runs through its whole extent. Its valleys, divided by large and impetuous rivers, and inundated by rains which prevail near two-thirds of the year, are marshy and unhealthy. Its inhabitants, advanced but a few degrees in civilization, had done nothing to remove or alleviate the difficulties of the passage from sea to sea, nor after a lapse of three hundred years, has it become more facile or commodious. The attempt of Balboa may justly be considered the boldest which had been made by the Spaniards in the new world; but he was in all respects fitted to insure its success. The quality of courage he possessed, only, in common with the meanest of his army;—but his prudence, generosity, and affability, and those nameless popular talents which inspire confidence and secure attachment, were peculiarly his own. In battle, his post was that of the greatest danger, and in every labour that of the greatest fatigue; whilst his regard for the ease of his troops was ever active and anxious. He desired for his undertaking a force of one thousand soldiers, but he commenced it with one hundred and ninety only, and some fierce blood-hounds, which were efficient auxiliaries. A thousand Indians, who accompanied him, were chiefly useful in the transportation of the baggage.

XXIV. Balboa set forth on the first of September, after the rainy season had passed. He proceeded by sea to the district of Coyba, and thence marched into that of the Cacique Ponca. At his approach, that chieftain fled to the deepest recesses of his mountains; but attracted by promises of favour, and a liberal donation of Spanish implements and toys, he returned to his village, and gave the Spaniards a small quantity of gold, some provisions, and guides. Further progress was sternly opposed

by a warlike tribe, armed with bows and arrows, and a species of sling, by which they threw staves hardened in the fire, with such force as to pass through the body of a naked adversary. But the novel and terrific effect of the firelock, the keen edge of the sword, and the ferocity of the bloodhounds, scattered them in dismay, with the loss of their Cacique, and six hundred of inferior note. Among the prisoners, were the brother of the Cacique, and several chiefs, who were clothed in tunics of white cotton; and being accused of unnatural crimes by their enemies, they were torn to pieces by the dogs, at the command of the Spaniards. This defeat made the neighbouring tribes fearful of provoking hostility, and disposed them to render such assistance as the Christians required. But great labour and patience were necessary to overcome the natural difficulties of the way. Disease and fatigue broke down some of the hardy veterans, and they were left behind to recruit their strength. A journey, estimated by the Indians to be of six days only, had already occupied twenty-five days, when Nunez approached the summit of a mountain, from which he was informed the great ocean might be seen. He commanded the army to halt, and advanced alone to the apex, whence he beheld the great South Sea spread before him, in boundless extent. Casting himself on his knees, he poured forth his grateful thanks to Heaven, for conducting him in safety to this glorious object. The army, beholding his transports, rushed forward and joined in his admiration, his exultation, and his gratitude. Then, with formal ceremony, he took possession of land and sea, making a record thereof, carefully attested, erecting crosses and mounds of stones, and cutting the king's name on trees. In his descent to the coast, he was compelled to combat with a Cacique called Chiapes, whom he

converted by his magnanimity into an active and zealous friend.

XXV. Whilst resting a few days at the village of Chiapes, Nunez sent back the guides who had conducted him over the mountain, with orders to his people whom he had left on the way, to rejoin him. In the mean time he sent forwards three parties of twelve men each, under the command of Francis Pizarro, Juan de Escary, and Alonzo Martin de Don Benito, respectively, to explore the surrounding country, and discover the best route to the sea. Alonzo Martin had the fortune to take the shortest road, and after two days' march, came to a beach on which lay two canoes; but there was no water in sight. Whilst considering these objects, the tide, which rises several fathoms on this coast, came rapidly in, and set them afloat. Martin entered one of the canoes, and called on his companions to bear witness that he was the first who had ventured on the South Sea; and Blas de Etienza following his example, required them to testify that he was the second.

Upon the return of Alonzo Martin with the tidings of his discovery, Nunez leaving a great part of his men at the village of Chiapes, proceeded with eighty Spaniards and a number of Indians, conducted by their friendly chief, towards the coast, and arrived on the borders of one of the vast bays which indent it, and to which he gave the name of St. Michael; it being discovered on that saint's day. When he reached the shore, he rushed into the ocean with his sword drawn, and called upon the witnesses to observe, that he had taken possession of it in the name of the king his master. He made several excursions along the coast, skirmishing occasionally with the natives, but eventually acquired the confidence and respect of all. He visited several of the neighbouring islands;



and collected a large quantity of gold and pearls; the sea here abounding in the species of oyster which produces these beautiful concretions. He also received from the Indians a further description of the great and wealthy empire in the south; with assurances that its product of the precious metals had not been exaggerated. And being informed that the inhabitants employed a species of animal for transporting burthens, he mistook the lama for the camel, and thence inferred with greater confidence that he was on the borders of Asia.

XXVI. The limited means of Balboa forbade the invasion of this land of promise with a view to conquest. And it would seem that the idea of a peaceful commercial visit merely to any part of the new world, was never entertained by the Spaniards, after the first voyage of Columbus. They never set foot on any part of it, however populous, but with the resolution to subject it to the crown of Castile. And arrogant and unjust as this disposition certainly was, it was encouraged, and in some measure warranted, by their vast superiority of intellect and power over the nations hitherto discovered. Nunez determined, therefore, to return for the present to Santa Maria, with the fixed resolution to gather a competent force, and to attempt the reduction of this mighty Indian empire, in the following summer. Upon his departure, he was honoured with tears of regret, from the inhabitants of the shores of the great ocean—a meed rare in the history of the first Spanish adventurers.

For the purpose of obtaining a more extensive knowledge of the isthmus, he returned by a route different from, and more difficult than that, by which he came. The long-sought and much-desired treasures his army had acquired, became an almost intolerable burden, which they were tempted to cast away in the slough of the valleys, or on the

precipices of the mountains. Everywhere the natives submitted to his will, and paid him large tributes in gold, making him their common judge and general arbitrator. In this character he condemned to death a Cacique called Poncra, who was accused by his neighbours of having done them much injury; and after having in vain, by blandishments and cruelty, endeavoured to extort from him his hoarded treasures, he caused his sentence to be executed by his dogs. He also seized, at the instance of his enemies, the chieftain Tubanama, the governor of an extensive country abounding in gold; and though his death was earnestly sought by vindictive neighbours, the Cacique procured his liberation by prayers and splendid presents. Nunez, when he reached Comagre, was so exhausted by fatigue, and reduced by fever, that he was unable to march on foot, and was carried in a litter upon the shoulders of the Indians. The old Cacique of this district being dead, was succeeded by that son who first informed Balboa of the existence of the South Sea, and Peruvian empire. The youthful chieftain received him with great joy, administered freely to his wants and those of his army, and presented him with the value of two thousand pesos, in gold. In the neighbouring district of Ponca, Nunez met some messengers from Darien, with tidings that two vessels had arrived from Hispaniola, freighted with provisions. He immediately selected twenty light-armed men, leaving the remainder to follow at leisure, and pushed on to Santa Maria, where he arrived on the ninth of January, 1514, after an absence of four months. He collected, during this expedition, near half a million of dollars; a larger sum than had been acquired by any adventurer in America; all which, after deducting the royal fifth, he divided among those who had accompanied him, and those who had remained

at Darien; giving to all the greatest contentment, not only by the dividend actually made, but also by the bright anticipations of the result of his contemplated invasion of the rich countries on the South Sea.\*

XXVII. Shortly after his return,† Balboa dispatched Pedro de Arbolanca, an attached friend and companion of his labours, to Spain, with an account of his great discoveries, and his still greater hopes. But whilst he was thus honourably striving to merit the favour of the king, an inquiry was progressing before the council of the Indies into the means by which he had attained the direction of the colony. Enciso had found favour in the eyes of the bishop of Burgos, who, on this occasion, is, we think, unjustly charged with a fatal antipathy to every man of merit in the new world.‡ The conduct of Balboa towards Nicuesa and Enciso, was irregular and inhuman, and the colony at Darien, without an authorized head, required the delegation of power to some one possessing the royal confidence. Neither the representations of Zamudio, nor the presents brought by Cayzedo and Colmenares, who were the bearers of the tidings relating to the existence of the South Sea and Peru, as communicated by the son of Comagre, had power to change the just views which the council took of these proceedings; but his successful journey across the isthmus, subsequently communicated, mollified their indignation.

XXVIII. By the discovery of the South Sea, Ferdinand beheld an immediate prospect of realizing his most ardent wish, of approaching the East Indies by the west, and partaking in that commerce which was greatly enriching the kingdom of Portugal. Balboa required a thousand men to com-

\* Herrera, Dec 1. lib x. † March, 1514 ‡ 1 Rob. Am. 191,

mence his enterprize; the king was willing to grant a much larger force, which he resolved to place under Don Pedrarias Davila, a man of distinguished family, with the commission of governor of Darien. Fifteen stout vessels were prepared to carry out twelve hundred soldiers; but such was the ardour of the Spanish gentry to embark for a country where gold might be drawn, like fish, in nets from the ocean, that the number was increased to fifteen hundred, and would have been much greater, had not the popular ardour been restrained. With his usual attention to the propagation of the Christian faith, the king sent in the fleet, father John de Quevedo, a Franciscan friar, made bishop of Darien, with such other spiritual aids as he deemed necessary.

XXIX. In the mean time, Balboa was not idle. He sent expeditions to various parts of the country to collect gold, and subject the natives to the Spanish dominion. And that he might be the better prepared for his grand object, by a more thorough knowledge of the isthmus, he ordered Andres de Garabito, with eighty men, to make a second visit to the South Sea. Nunez himself, at the head of three hundred soldiers, ascended the river San Juan, which empties itself through seven mouths into the gulf of Darien. Within the distance of twelve leagues, he found many lagoons on both sides of the river, whose borders were covered with large canes and reeds. Further up, the stream spread into a lake, in the centre whereof was a large island, covered with palm-trees, on which the natives, in number exceeding four thousand, had constructed their habitations.\* They assailed the Spaniards, on their approach, with bows, darts, and slings; and in despite of their targets, mortally

\* See Note K. Appendix.

wounded many of them. A discharge of fire-arms drove them back ; but observing their invaders to direct their course towards the inhabited trees, they returned, and with a courage and resolution which mocked at death, again attacked them, and drove them to their boats, wounding Balboa himself severely.

XXX. Pedrarias reached Darien about the middle of July. Balboa was deeply chagrined at being thus superseded, and his people not less vexed at beholding the fruits of their toil about to be divided with others ; yet all readily submitted to the will of their sovereign, and received their governor with the respect due to his station. The conduct of Nunez was remarkable, differing from his deportment towards those who formerly claimed authority over him, more particularly as he now commanded a force of four hundred and fifty veterans, drawn principally from the islands by the fame of his discoveries, with whom he was an overmatch for the undisciplined and unannealed company of Pedrarias. Inquiries were eagerly made relative to the pearl fisheries and gold mines, of which such splendid accounts had been received in Spain ; and many of the new adventurers as earnestly sought the favoured spots, where they might cast their nets for treasure. But joyous anticipation was succeeded by dismay, when they learned that the pearls must be brought from the bottom of the ocean, and the gold dug from the mines, with much labour and risk of life. Pursuant to instructions, Pedrarias instituted an inquiry into the administration of Balboa, and especially into his treatment of Nicuesa and Enciso ; and imposed a fine upon him of several thousand dollars ; at once gratifying his own jealousy, and filling the bosom of the humbled captain with burning resentment.

XXXI. The disproportion of the population to

the supply of food, the great evil common to the settlement of new countries, awaited the colony of Santa Maria. The stock, barely competent for the settlers under Nunez, and the stores brought from Spain by Pedrarias, were soon exhausted. Unfortunately, too, the late adventurers had arrived at the most sickly season of the year, and, unacclimated, were exposed, during the rainy months, to the deleterious exhalations of a marshy and uncultivated country, sweltering in unchangeable and tropical heat. Famine and pestilence did their office. In less than a month, more than seven hundred persons perished, in the utmost misery. The golden visions which had stimulated many of the principal cavaliers, faded away; and some willingly exchanged their bright hopes for permission to return.

XXXII. That he might prevent the remainder from brooding over their misfortunes, Pedrarias sent parties into the interior of the country to establish stations on the route to the Southern ocean, and to plunder the natives. His nephew, of the same name, with four hundred men, entered the province of Zenu, situated thirty leagues eastward of Darien, and said to abound in gold. He spent here three months, but did not advance more than six leagues from the shore; declining to visit the mines which a friendly chief proffered to show him, although they were distant three days' journey only; preferring to wrest by open violence from the natives, whatever he desired. But the quantity of gold he obtained was inconsiderable, and he purchased it dearly, by the loss of forty-five soldiers, who were slain by the Indians. His prisoners, however, five hundred in number, produced a large sum, when sold as slaves in the islands. This expedition proving unsatisfactory, Enciso was selected to lead another party to Zenu, in confident ex-



pectation that his experience would enable him to draw a great treasure from this province, which contained the sepulchres of many tribes, who were accustomed to bury with their dead, the ornaments which they wore whilst living. In becoming a soldier, Enciso could not at once divest himself of the habits of the lawyer. His regard for forms, prompted him to republish the proclamation which had been furnished to Ojeda. The Caciques, to whom this manifesto was read and explained, readily admitted the existence of a God, the creator of heaven and earth; but they could not comprehend that the pope could give, and the king take, the possessions of others; and they threatened, should his majesty make the attempt, to elevate his head upon a pole, as they did the heads of their enemies. Enciso then very formally and gravely assured them, that it became his duty to slay, or reduce them to slavery; and upon their reply, that they would treat him as they would his master, he had recourse to arms, from which he derived inconsiderable advantages, the Indians defending themselves with skill and courage.

Under the direction of the captain Bezarrá, a new and shorter road was opened between the two seas. Juan Ayora, the governor's lieutenant, visited, with four hundred men, the districts of Comagre, Ponca, and Tubanama, and rewarded the kind hospitality of their chiefs, by enslaving the persons, plundering the property, and debauching the wives of their subjects; thus heedlessly casting away the advantages Núñez had gained in the friendship of the natives. He commenced the erection of a town upon a river, which he called Santa Cruz. And having learned that Secativa, a chieftain who resided some distance to the west, was one of the most wealthy princes of the country, he dispatched a party to his district, with orders to capture as

many of his people, and to pillage as widely as possible. But the Cacique, informed of this movement, placed his women and children in safety, and awaited in ambush the approach of the invaders; and suddenly springing upon them as they advanced, he wounded their leader, and the major part of his troops, and drove them back to their boats. Stung by this defeat, Ayora sought to gratify his vengeance by falling on the country of Pocorosa; commanding his soldiers to lay it waste, and to capture the Cacique, that he might extort from him a large ransom in gold. One of his soldiers, who had accompanied Nunez across the isthmus, remonstrated against this conduct, as contrary to good faith and the covenant of peace; and was rewarded for this rare instance of virtue, by instant death. On his arrival at Darien, Ayora paid into the treasury the king's fifth of his rapine; but contrived to secrete the remainder, which should have been divided with his band, and, by the connivance of Pedrarias, to return to Spain with his ill-gotten wealth. His town of Santa Cruz was left exposed to the rage of Pocorosa, who, at the head of the neighbouring Caciques, attacked it in the night, and slew all its inhabitants save five, who escaped to Santa Maria.\*

XXXIII. To extenuate the unfortunate results of his administration, Pedrarias, in his letters to Spain, accused Nunez of having exaggerated his own services and the wealth of the country. Balboa refuted these misrepresentations, by contrasting the present wretched state of the colony with its late prosperous condition. Before the arrival of the governor, the colonists were cheerful, and comfortably clothed; had more than two hundred cottages, surrounded by extensive fields of grain; and

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. 1. A. D. 1515.

were not only at peace with the Caciques of the neighbourhood, but were on such friendly terms with the Indians generally, that a lone Spaniard might pass safely from sea to sea. But since that event, a great number of the Castilians had perished, the survivors were sick and suffering, the circumjacent country was devastated, and the friendly relations with the Indians wholly destroyed. These circumstances were duly weighed at court; and though the king did not remove Pedrarias, he sought to give fuller scope to the genius of Nunez, by appointing him Adelantado, or lieutenant governor of the countries on the South Sea; at the same time commanding Pedrarias, not only to support him in all his operations, but to consult him on such measures as he might himself pursue. But the jealousy of the governor was too deeply rooted to permit him to regard the commands of his sovereign; and though, by the advice of his officers, he suffered Balboa to assume the title of his new rank, he denied him the power which belonged to it, and even required him to give security that he would not take upon him the government of the countries assigned him, without his special permission. Under the conviction that the king would finally make a proper estimate of his services, Balboa had, without the knowledge of Pedrarias, sought in the islands independent means for an expedition to the South Sea; and his agent, Garibito, about this period arrived at *Nombre de Dios*, with seventy men, for this purpose. His intention secretly to join this small army was discovered, and he was saved from imprisonment only by the interference of the bishop Quevedo, who earnestly persuaded the governor to employ him in the exploration of the coast so rich in pearls.

XXXIV. Pedrarias rejected his request, but dispatched Casper de Morales and Ferdinand Pizarro,

with fifty men, to attempt this object. They left half their force by the way, under a captain Peñalosa, at the village of the Cacique Tutibra, and with the remainder, after several engagements with the Indians on the shores and islands of the western coast, they succeeded in obtaining an accurate knowledge of the country, and a large quantity of pearls. An island Cacique presented them with one hundred and ten marks' weight (equal to fifty pounds) of pearls, among which were two of distinguished size and beauty—one weighing twenty-seven carats, was similar in form to a small nut; the other, weighing thirty carats, was pear-shaped, more oriental and perfect, and of beautiful colour and lustre. This gem was purchased by Pedrarias, whose wife presented it to the consort of the emperor Charles V. The savage donor received in exchange some beads, bells, and iron hatchets, the last of which, in reply to the sneers of the Spaniards, he wisely declared far more valuable than the useless pearls. Taking the captain and other Spaniards to the top of a small wooden tower, from whence might be seen the surrounding sea—"Behold," he said, "this great sea, and all the islands which acknowledge my authority, are at your service whilst you continue my friends. I have little gold, but many pearls, and I desire your friendship far more than pearls; to secure which, nothing shall be wanting on my part." Then turning to the southwest, he declared that the land before them, which was Peru, whose mountains were distinctly visible, abounded with gold and pearls. He readily consented to pay to the king of Castile an annual tribute of an hundred marks of pearls, esteeming that an inconsiderable quantity. He, and his whole household also, received the rite of baptism, and became adopted Christians, himself assuming the name of Pedrarias.

XXXV. At the request of the Spaniards, he exhibited to them the manner of conducting the pearl fishery. His Indians availing themselves of a calm sea, anchored their canoes, with stones attached to cables of osier, upon the selected spot. The diver, with a bag around his neck to receive the oysters, descended sometimes to the depth of ten fathoms, the largest oysters being found in the deepest water. The fishery was laborious and dangerous, the oysters adhering to the rocks, or to each other, with great tenacity, and the diver being exposed to the danger of exhaustion, and to the attacks of the shark and the Marage, another voracious fish.

XXXVI. During the absence of Morales, Peñaloza had, by his oppressive conduct, roused the resentment, and induced a confederacy, of the neighbouring chiefs. Upon relanding, Morales dispatched a party of ten men to recall him, he being then traversing the country at some distance. The messengers were received at the village of the Cacique Chichama, one of the confederates, with much apparent affection. But, in the dead of the night, the house in which they lodged was set on fire, and half their number perished in the flames. The flight of a chief called Chiruca, who, with his son, had professed great friendship for the Spaniards, and had accompanied them in their progress, gave rise to suspicion in the mind of Morales, that some sinister design was entertained by the natives. The fugitive was pursued and overtaken, and being subjected to torture, confessed his knowledge of the conspiracy, and became the agent for betraying his associates. He was compelled to invite all the confederates, eighteen in number, to a general meeting, to commune with him on certain important preliminaries; and when they were assembled, they were easily made prisoners by the Spaniards. Morales and Peñalosa were thus enabled to unite

their forces, and to attack the natives, deprived of their leaders. The Spaniards, according to their custom, made the assault in the night, shouting their war-cry of Saint Jago! and at sunrise they counted seven hundred of their enemies who were slain. But this hecatomb of victims did not satiate their vengeance; *that* required the sacrifice of all the chiefs, the traitor Chiruca included.

Having learned that a powerful and warlike Cacique dwelt on the eastern part of the gulf of San Michael, who was called Biru, and sometimes Biruquete, from whom Peru was supposed to take its name, Morales resolved to attack him. He assailed the village in the night; but the chief, escaping, inspirited his countrymen, and valiantly fought the invader during the greater part of the following day, and though finally repulsed, the victors were glad to retrace their steps, and take up their march for Darien. But their route was beset by the followers of the slaughtered Caciques, who, though frequently defeated, hung upon their flanks, and greatly annoyed them; and at length forced them to a secret and precipitate flight. The Indians hotly pursued, nor could they be turned from the chase by the cruel wiles of the Spaniards, who butchered their prisoners, and left their bodies in the path, that the pursuers might be delayed in mourning their murdered friends. At last, without guides, and almost bereft of hope, the Castilians reached Darien, having wandered for some time in a circle, now fighting with the fury of desperation, now struggling through almost impervious forests, or wading almost impassable fens.

XXXVII. Another exploring party was sent to the South Sea under Tello de Guzman, who took up, in his way, a small garrison which had been left by Ayora in the territories of Tubanama, and which was besieged and reduced almost to famine



by that Cacique. The chief readily listened to proposals of peace, and promises of satisfaction for past injuries; and received Guzman with the frankest hospitality. The Castilian returned this kindness by putting him to death, on the complaint of a young Indian, who accused him of usurpation, and promised a rich donation, in case the government of the district were restored to him. On his arrival at Panama, Guzman sent his lieutenant, Albitez, with eighty men, into the neighbouring province of Chagre. Of the latter commander, it is recorded, that he entered an Indian town whilst its inhabitants were asleep, and did no injury. The Cacique, surprized and gratified that his village was not burned, and his people slaughtered, presented Albitez with the value of twelve thousand pesos in gold; who very modestly asked the donor to fill him a large sack of the same metal. The Indian, alarmed and indignant at his rapacity, bade him fill his sack with stone at the brook, for that he had no more gold, and was unable to make it. Upon Guzman's return to Darien, he was met at Tubanama by a large party of Indians, carrying as standards, linen shirts dyed in the blood of Spaniards whom they had killed. They fiercely attacked the troops, threatening them with the fate of the settlers at Santa Cruz; but by maintaining a running fight, Guzman reached Darien with his people, much spent by fatigue, and suffering from wounds inflicted by the Indian arrows. In his hasty flight, he was deprived of the greater part of the gold he had gathered, being compelled to exchange it for water with the inhabitants of the territories through which he passed.

XXXVIII. A party of seventy men, under Francis de Vallejo, sent to chastise the natives of Uraba for alleged injuries against those of Darien, fared worse than that under Guzman. At the attack of

an Indian town, the Spaniards separated in search of gold, and were thus exposed to the poisoned arrows of the enemy, and finally compelled to retreat. As they entered the country, they were surrounded by warriors, who had suffered from the depredations of Odeja and Guerra, armed with weapons tinged with a poison so deadly, that the wounded died in raving madness. Villejo, finding it impossible to contend with this host of enemies, resolved to return to Darien. He attempted to descend the River of Nets on rafts, which, hastily and badly constructed, soon went to pieces. The exhausted Spaniards, followed by the Indians on the banks, struggled with the current, on the separated logs, or sought to preserve a few wretched moments of life by clinging to the trees which dropped their branches into the stream. The bolder and stronger made for the shore, in despite of the flights of poisoned arrows discharged upon them. Twelve only of the party returned to Darien, and of these few survived.

XXXIX. A fate yet more unfortunate befell a detachment of one hundred and eighty men, under Francis Bezarra, designed to avenge the companions of Villejo, and afterwards to enter the province of Zenu, which Enciso had previously visited with little profit. His march through Uraba was highly perilous. The Indians, taught by experience the great advantages which the Spaniards possessed when combating in the open fields, blocked their path by fallen trees, and poured their darts and arrows upon the perplexed army from the cover of the bushes, unseen. Instead, therefore, of inflicting vengeance, Bezarra had much difficulty to protect himself. On his arrival at the river Zenu, near a principal Indian town, the chiefs proposed a truce, and offered to transport his army in their canoes across the stream. Bezarra, disregarding the

wise maxim which teaches us to distrust the gift of an enemy, rashly consented. The warriors fell upon his divided force, and destroyed his whole army. The story of its fate was borne to Pedrarias by an Indian boy, who waited on the commander.

XL. The boldness and success of the Indians, gave great uneasiness to the governor, and so alarmed the colonists that they beheld their enemies in the trees of the mountains, and the tall grass of the plains, and their canoes in the waves as they rolled into the bay. The discontents of the people exasperated by Nunez and his party, were vehemently expressed. The foundery was shut up, and the refining of gold suspended;—a measure hitherto adopted during siege or famine only. The inhabitants, intent on personal safety, disregarded the accumulation of wealth; and making a public confession of their sins, they besought the pardon and protection of the Deity. As a measure of defence, the governor resolved to distract the attention of the foe, by sending another party through their country to the South Sea.

XLI. Gonzalo de Badajos, with one hundred and thirty men, set forth by the way of Nombre de Dios, the passage from that place being the shortest across the isthmus. The ruins of the fort, the human bones bleaching in the sun, and the monumental crosses which told the lamentable history of Nicuesa's misfortunes on this spot, were deemed ominous by the troops, and they protested against proceeding further in this direction. But Badajos promptly commanding the return of the vessel which brought them, left them no alternative but to march or perish on the coast. He extracted from every Cacique in his route large sums in gold; but had nearly lost his lieutenant, Alonzo Perez de la Rua, by an artifice of a chief whom he had made prisoner. On the suggestion of the Indian, Rua,

with thirty men, was dispatched to surprize a Cacique called Nata, who was represented as having few subjects, yet very rich in gold. A rapid night-march brought the Spaniards to his residence; but they were astonished to behold with the rising sun a country studded with villages, and swarming with inhabitants. They did not hesitate an instant to make the attack, and fortunately immediately captured the Cacique, from whom they obtained a valuable treasure. His people, directed by his brother, prepared to liberate or avenge him; but quietly submitted to the command of their prince, although the wives and children of many were prisoners. Badajos, who soon after arrived to the support of Rua, took up quarters here for the winter or rainy months, during which he made several excursions into the neighbouring country, and obtained a valuable plunder. The gold which he amassed during his expedition, was valued at near a half million of dollars of our present money.

XLII. A Cacique, whom the Spaniards named Paris, at their approach, fled with his people to the mountains, and refused to return, though threatened by Badajos with pursuit and death. To propitiate him, however, the chief sent a present of four *patecas*, or boxes, made of palm-leaves, lined with deer skins, and filled with plates of gold, the ornaments of his women, valued at fifty thousand pesos. Surprized at the richness of this donation, Badajos supposed the donor must possess still greater treasures, which he treacherously prepared to seize, whilst his messengers bore back the strongest assurances of friendship and gratitude. For this purpose he feigned to retire, and thereby drew the Cacique back to his village, which he attacked two nights after. The Cacique escaped, but his women, and gold to the value of forty thousand pesos, fell into the hands of the Spaniards. The

indignant Paris, roused to vengeance, succeeded in dividing the Spanish force, by a stratagem addressed to their avarice, and boldly attacking them, slew seventy of their number, and wounded the greater part of the remainder. He also captured their baggage, including the immense treasures so iniquitously gathered, and liberated more than four hundred slaves. Badajos retreated along the shore of the South Sea, displaying military abilities which would have dignified a more virtuous enterprize. The Cacique Nata harassed his march. The chief of a province called Chame, met him on his own frontier, and prohibited his passage; but supplied him with food on his taking another route. Yet amid the most imminent dangers, the Spanish commander found means to visit several islands on the coast, to seize their chiefs, and extort their treasures, and finally to return to Darien. But he lost in this expedition three-fourths of his men, and his lieutenant Rua, who fell in one of his last engagements.

XLIII. In the mean time, Pedrarias doubting the truth of the reported fate of Bezarra, resolved personally to seek him, but dared not openly proclaim his purpose, as none of the colonists would engage in any expedition to Uraba or Zenu, on account of the dread they entertained of the poisoned weapons of the natives of these districts. Under pretence of making war upon Pocorosa, and other neighbouring chieftains, he organized a force of more than three hundred men, whom he embarked on board several vessels. He sailed, during the day, westward, but changed his course at night, and before day landed two hundred men, under the command of Bartolome Hurtado, at Caribana. In a grave and severe tone, he commanded them to obey their officers without inquiring whither they were to go, or what they were to do. An Indian

village was immediately beset and fired, and many of the inhabitants were slaughtered, or made prisoners, as they rushed from the flames. Others, however, made head with their much-dreaded poisoned weapons, and compelled the Spaniards to retire to their ships. From his prisoners, Pedrarias received the confirmation of the destruction of Bezarra and his party. This principal object of his journey accomplished, he again directed his course towards lower Terra Firma, and landed at the port of Acla, with all his army. The licentiate Espinosa, his chief alcade, marched with some of the troops against Pocorosa, whilst Pedrarias employed the remainder in erecting a fortification of earth and wood. Having encouraged his troops by his example in labouring at the work, he returned after a few days to Darien, leaving the captain, Gabriel de Rojas, in command at the fort.

XLIV. Espinosa, who was engaged in the district of Pocorosa and Comagre, when Badajos passed through to Darien, prepared immediately to recover the wealth which the latter had lost; and he required from Pedrarias proper assistance for this object; who sent him one hundred and thirty men, under Valenzuela, although Badajos claimed this enterprize as his right. On his way, Valenzuela touched at the island of Bastimientos, where he made some prisoners, and thence proceeding to Terra Firma, he staved his vessels, by the orders of the governor, that his soldiers might not think of returning, save as victors. Espinosa, desirous to show that the talents of the soldier were not incompatible with the learning of the jurist, had already set forward. Chiefly by the fear his horses inspired, which were now seen here for the first time, he easily overcame and dispersed an army of three thousand Indians, who had united in the provinces of Comagre and Pocorosa. After the bat-



tle, he formally tried his prisoners, and punished them according to the offences he chose to lay to their charge; hanging some, and cutting off the hands and noses of others. In his progress, the Cacique of Chiru was captured, his neighbour of Nata submitted without struggle, but Paris fought with resolution, and though beaten, refused to sue for peace.\*

In the mean time, Valenzuela followed in quest of Espinosa, without any certain indication of his route; but after much suffering from hunger and fatigue, discovered him by the discharge of fire-arms. The united Spanish force was deemed by its leaders sufficient to subjugate the whole of Terra Firma. The treasure captured from Badajos had been given in charge to a Cacique called Quema, to whom Albitez was sent, with sixty men, to recover it. But, being unable to extract any information from its keepers, he brought them to Espinosa, who, as Herrera says, "being crafty in fair words," soon learned where it was hidden, and recovered about eighty thousand castellanos. The remainder was said to be secreted in the country of the Cacique Chicacotia, whither Espinosa marched his army, resolving to spend the winter season there, the place abounding with provisions. A temporary church was erected, in which the priests said mass, and laboured for the conversion of the Indians. Some women and children submitted to baptism, but the men were hardened in their infidelity.

XLV. The neighbouring Indians resolving on a vigorous effort to rid themselves of their oppressors, collected a force of twenty thousand men. But they were unable to resist the weapons and skill of the Spaniards, strengthened by a consider-

\* Herrera, Dec. 11. lib. 2.

able body of the natives, who, properly commanded, proved valuable auxiliaries. After defeating and routing this great army, Espinosa sent the captains, Ponce and Hurtado, to make further discoveries on the South Sea, whilst he extended his inquiries over the adjacent countries. The former visited several islands, and a greater part of the coast towards the east, and obtained many Indian prisoners, much gold, and other booty. The march of Espinosa, on his return to Darien, was scarce less difficult and dangerous than his outward progress. The natives administered to his wants, during the immediate presence of his army, but as soon as he passed from any district, they resumed their arms and hostile attitude. At length, he regained Santa Maria del Darien, having been relieved on his way by Christopher Sorrano, who was engaged in reducing the province of Comagre, again in rebellion; and by Balboa, then at Acla, labouring to advance his enterprize on the Southern ocean. The booty in gold and slaves acquired by Espinosa, was very great. The latter exceeded two thousand in number. The division of the spoil enriched all who accompanied him, and fostered the vices which usually grow from the violent and sudden acquisition of wealth. Gaming was most rife; the meanest player never risked less than two crowns, and Pedrarias, at one throw, played away an hundred slaves.\*

XLVI. The jealousy and hatred of Pedrarias towards Balboa, at length yielded to the good offices of the bishop Quevedo; and to cement their union more strongly, the governor consented to give his daughter, then in Spain, in marriage to Nunez. The fruit of this reconciliation, was the immediate resumption of the design of the latter upon the South Sea; and as auxiliary thereto, the erection

\* Herrera, Dec. 11. lib. 2.

of a town at Acla. And here, with the prudence which eminently distinguished him, he compelled each of his men to sow a piece of land, of which he set the first example. He followed Espinosa to Darien, rightly supposing that his disbanded troops, accustomed to the license of Indian warfare and the excitements of plunder, would not long remain content amid the dull scenes of peace. Pedrarias, who seemed disposed sincerely to aid his purpose, assisted him in raising two hundred men, and supplied him with all things necessary for their equipment. Balboa had appointed Albitez his lieutenant at Acla, who, partaking of that spirit which, in these extraordinary scenes, prompted every ambitious man to strike out a path for himself, departed for Hispaniola, to obtain permission and assistance to establish a colony at Nombre de Dios, that he might thence prosecute adventures on the western coast of the Isthmus. His projects were coldly received at St. Domingo; and being referred to Pedrarias, he returned to Darien with sixty recruits, pretending that he had visited Hispaniola solely to procure reinforcements and provisions for the colonies on Terra Firma.

XLVII. Returning to Acla, Nunez prepared the timber and rigging for two brigantines, and established a depot of provisions on the mountains. The wrought timber, and other necessities, were carried across the isthmus by Indian and negro slaves; but, in this extraordinary labour, which destroyed many of the natives, the Spaniards also participated. Before his squadron could be got afloat, Nunez experienced delays and disappointments, which sorely tried his patience. The frames of the vessels, obtained with so much labour, were rendered worthless by the worms; new ones, which were cut on the river Las Balsas, were carried away by the flood; and all other evils were much

aggravated by the scarcity of food. Yet, in despite of these discouraging circumstances, he succeeded in launching two small vessels upon the Southern ocean; in which he immediately transported a part of his army to the largest of the pearl islands, and whilst the vessels returned for the remainder, he employed himself in collecting provisions, that he might thereby straiten the inhabitants, and maintain his own forces.

XLVIII. At this period, Nunez was stimulated in his enterprize by a letter from the archbishop of Seville, the friend and patron of Columbus, assuring him, that if he followed the coast to the west, he would encounter a race covered with mail, and armed with spears; but if he went eastward, he would find a wealthy country, abounding in cattle. Choosing the latter, he embarked with one hundred men on a short voyage of exploration, and touching at Port Pinas, five-and-twenty leagues east of cape St. Michael, he landed, to chastise the Cacique Chicama for the slaughter of the Spaniards under Morales. On his return to the island, he prepared timber for two other vessels; and soon after, by a party sent to Acla for their equipments, he received tidings that Pedrarias was about to be superseded by Lope de Sosa, a gentleman of Cordova. This news much disturbed him, exciting apprehensions that, with the governor, he would also be removed, and that his labours would grace the fortunes of another. In private conversation with his friends, he deplored this probable result, and declared his resolution to prosecute his design at all hazards. This declaration, imperfectly overheard, was represented to Pedrarias as an open annunciation of rebellion, and gave increased vigour to his hatred and jealousy, which had been rekindled, by the meritorious services of Balboa. Actuated by these malevolent passions, he did not scruple to defeat

an enterprize of the greatest moment to his country. He recalled Balboa to Darien, when, with four vessels and three hundred men, he was about to commence his search for the rich countries of the South. Balboa having no suspicion of the evil intentions of the governor, immediately obeyed; and though he was apprized, before he reached Acla, of the disposition of Pedrarias, he did not hesitate, in the confidence of his innocence, to put himself into his power. But this was no longer a matter of choice, since Pizarro, who had been sent forward to arrest him, soon after fell in with him, and performed that duty. On his arrival at Darien, he was thrown into prison; and Hurtado was dispatched to take the command of the armament on the Pacific. Nunez was hastily put on trial before the chief alcade, Espinosa, on the charges of disloyalty to the king, and sedition against the governor; and was sentenced to death at the express command of the latter. The judge who pronounced the sentence, together with the whole colony, vainly interceded for the pardon of the prisoner, and the Spaniards beheld with astonishment and sorrow, the public execution of a man confessedly more capable than any who had been in command in America, of forming and accomplishing great designs. In youth he had lived somewhat freely, but his mature years redeemed his early errors. His oppressor and murderer was not only screened from punishment, but was continued in power, by the influence of the bishop of Burgos, and other courtiers.

Some extenuation of the crime of the governor may be found in the false representations of Garribito, the confidential but traitorous lieutenant of Balboa. This man had, before the last departure of Nunez from Acla, written privately to Pedrarias, that the former had no intention to consummate his marriage with the daughter of the latter, being de-

voted to his Indian princess, the descendant of Carata; and that he used the friendship of the governor merely for the promotion of his own interests, and intended to assume absolute independence, as soon as his vessels were ready for sea. The impression made on the mind of Pedrarias was deepened by the enemies of Nunez at Darien, and particularly by the deportment of Garribito, who had been sent to Acla to ascertain the truth of the report relative to the change of governor. Finding that the intended successor of Pedrarias had died in the very harbour, he made such indiscreet declarations relative to the intentions of Balboa, as occasioned his own arrest, and the transit of his person and papers to Darien. Upon his examination, he revealed not only what he knew with respect to those intentions, but also, all that he conjectured. These communications alarmed the friends of Nunez at Darien, particularly Hernando de Arguello, who had embarked in his enterprize a great portion of his fortune. He therefore wrote to Nunez, urging him to put to sea immediately, and to rely on the protection of the Jeronimite fathers at St. Domingo, who regarded his enterprize as promotive of the glory of God, as well as the dominion of the king. This letter fell into the hands of Pedrarias, and confirmed his belief in the existence of a plot against his authority, and involved the writer in the fate of his friend. With them perished on the scaffold, as fellow-conspirators, Valderrabano, Botello, and Hernan Muños, officers of Balboa.

XLIX. The expedition which Nunez had planned, was suspended by his death; but was shortly after resumed by Giles Gonzales, who was authorized by the king to appropriate to his use the vessels which the former had built. But Pedrarias refusing to surrender them, Gonzales constructed others, from timber which he also caused to be



carried across the isthmus from Acla, with the sacrifice of one hundred and twenty, out of two hundred men under his command. His ships were scarce ready for sea, before they were destroyed by the worms. Yet, with that patience and resolution which eminently distinguished the Spaniards in their American enterprizes, he applied himself to repair this disaster; and with some Indians and Spaniards, whom Pedrarias reluctantly supplied, by the express command of the king, he recommenced his labours at the pearl islands.

L. Soon after the death of Nunez, Pedrarias proceeded to the South Sea, leaving Espinosa captain-general of the colony at Darien. He founded the city of Panama; and about the same time, Albitez built another town at Nombre de Dios. These ports were for many years the depôts of the trade between the North and the South Seas. Both were very unhealthy, and proved the graves of many thousand Spaniards. By permission of the king, the government of the colony was removed from Santa Maria to Panama, whose commodious situation contributed greatly to facilitate the subsequent conquests upon the Pacific ocean.

LI. Lope de Sosa, who was appointed to succeed Pedrarias, arrived with his chief alcade, the licentiate, Alarconcillo, at Darien, at the close of the year 1518. But he died at the entrance of the port. Pedrarias, therefore, continued in the exercise of the government, for which he received a new commission, when the death of Sosa was known in Spain.

LII. We have already mentioned, that a portion of the colonists of Darien were driven to the island of Cuba, in consequence of the famine and pestilence which prevailed at that port, soon after the arrival of Pedrarias.\* To these adventurers, in

\* 1515.

number about a hundred, and of the better class of Spaniards, Velasquez proposed a voyage of discovery to Veragua or Florida. Frances Hernandez Cordova, a wealthy inhabitant of Cuba, proffered to lead the enterprize, for which he embarked one hundred and ten soldiers, on board two ships and a brigantine, fitted out at his private expense. He was accompanied by Alonzo Gonçalez, a priest from Havana, and Antonio Alaminos, a pilot who had served under the first admiral, and also under Leon, at the discovery of Florida. The expedition left Havana on the 8th of February, 1517, and by the advice of Alaminos, pursued a westerly course, which, Columbus had always taught, would lead to the greatest discoveries. After sailing twenty-one days, they observed a cape, which they called Catoche, from an expression of the natives, signifying an invitation to their dwellings; and they afterwards gave to the country the name of Yucatan, from a corruption of certain Indian words, a name which it continues to bear.

As they approached the shore, the Spaniards descried a large town, from which five canoes came off, filled with people, clad in cotton jackets without sleeves, and cotton robes, which covered their lower limbs. The Castilians were alike surprized and rejoiced at this discovery; for, hitherto, the nakedness of the inhabitants of the lands they had visited, at once betrayed the absence of civilization. Above thirty of the Indians unhesitatingly came on board the squadron, and displayed their very natural admiration of what they beheld; and Cordova strove, by kind treatment and small presents, to gain their good-will. At their departure, they invited the Spaniards, by signs, to land; and on the next morning sent twelve canoes to bring them on shore. The Spaniards, armed in their customary manner, but without suspicion of treach-

ery, complied with their request. They were immediately surrounded by a crowd of the people; and a Cacique, with apparent kindness, invited them to his dwelling, which, to their increased astonishment, was built of stone and mortar. On their way, in a thick wood, at a signal from their guide, they were assailed by a multitude of warriors, adorned with paint and feathers, covered with quilted cotton mail, and armed with wooden swords edged with flint, spears, and slings. With a hideous shout, responding to the noise of their musical instruments, they poured on the Spaniards a shower of stones and arrows, by which fifteen were wounded, and immediately advanced to a close encounter, fighting with great resolution. But the keen edge of the Spanish sword, the force of their cross-bows, and the astounding explosion of their fire-arms, put them to flight. During the combat, the priest González found his way into a stone temple, where he discovered many hideous idols and obscene images of men and women, made of clay; and he possessed himself of some boxes filled with similar objects, of a smaller size, intermingled with ornaments of gold. Cordova returned to his ships with two prisoners, more pleased than irritated, at the conduct of the natives, in whose art and warlike disposition he saw the advance of civilization.\*

LIII. Following the coast westward for fifteen days, Cordova arrived at a large town, situated on a bay, called by the natives Campeachy, and which he supposed to be the mouth of a river. He landed in search of water, which he obtained from a well used by the natives. More hospitably received than at Catoche, he visited the town and several temples, in which he discovered idols of monstrous shapes, and recent stains of blood; and, to his great

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. 2.

astonishment, wooden crosses covered with paint. From one of the temples issued a train of priests, clad in long white mantles, their hair gathered in knots around the head, and earthen vessels in their hands, in which they burned a species of gum before the Spaniards. This ceremony does not appear to have been a mark of respect, but rather a superstitious rite performed for their own protection; since they bade the Spaniards depart instantly, under the penalty of death, and demonstrated, at the same time, an intention to resort to arms. Cordova, unwilling to engage in a useless contest, with an enemy whom experience had taught him was to be dreaded, instantly departed. He landed again, a few days afterwards, at the town of Potonchan, where he found water in wells near the temples, as at Campeachy. A party of Indians demanded whether he came from the countries where the sun rises? and being answered in the affirmative, immediately withdrew. Cordova spent the night on shore, but he was disturbed by warlike noises from the Indian quarters, and in the morning beheld himself surrounded by a host of enemies. A cloud of missiles poured from every side, inflicted innumerable wounds on his soldiers; and he received himself twelve arrows in his body. After fighting some time with their usual skill and bravery, the Spaniards cut their way to the boats, but were followed even into the sea by the enemy, who slew forty-seven outright, captured two alive, and wounded many; of whom five died soon after they reached the ships. Discouraged by this severe loss, Cordova resolved to burn one of his ships, which he could no longer man, and return to Cuba. He touched at Florida, where he lost one of his crew, who was captured by the natives; several others died of their wounds before they reached

the Havana, and he himself expired, ten days after his arrival.

LIV. This expedition, notwithstanding its unfortunate events, produced great excitement in Cuba. A comparatively civilized people, clothed in seemly garments, well armed, brave ; having an established religion, massive temples, and trains of priests ; and possessing skill in working metals, had been discovered at a short distance from that island. Gold too had been seen among them, and the prisoners reported that it abounded in their soil. The splendid visions which occupied the adventurers in the second voyage of Columbus, descended on the busy spirits of Cuba. Valasquez, who earnestly desired an opportunity to recommend himself to the king, and to make his government independent of the admiral, gladly engaged in measures for the further exploration of Yucatan. He fitted out four ships, on board of which two hundred and forty volunteers, some of whom possessing rank and fortune, embarked, under the command of Juan de Grijalva, who was instructed to observe the country, to trade for gold with the natives, and in case circumstances permitted, to establish a colony there.

LV. He sailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the 8th of April, 1518. Alaminos, again chief pilot, pursued his former course, but the ships falling off, in consequence of the currents, he made the island of Cozumel, on the eastern coast of Yucatan. The inhabitants fled at sight of the vessels ; but two old men were taken in a field of maize, and dismissed with presents, and a message to their Cacique. They never returned. But whilst the Spaniards awaited them, a young and agreeable woman approached, and addressed them in the language of Jamaica. She had been one of a party from that island, who, two years before, whilst fishing at sea,

had been overtaken by a storm, and driven to Cozumel; where the men, ten in number, including her husband, had been sacrificed to idols. By her agency, Grijalva again attempted to communicate with the natives, but unable to allay their fears, he departed, taking her on board at her earnest solicitation. He observed here many hives of good honey, batates, (potatoes) and swine similar to those of the islands. Temples of stone, surrounded with walled inclosures, were numerous, and constructed with considerable art. In one of the inclosures was a cross made of lime, three yards high, to which the aborigines addressed their prayers for rain. Other crosses of like material, but painted, were common.

LVI. We may not doubt the existence of these structures similar to the Christian cross; but we are not required to credit the conjectures or legends of the Spanish historians in relation to them. Gomara says, it was supposed that Christians had taken refuge here when Spain was subjected by the Moors. Herrera, however, assures us that the cause of the Indian veneration for this symbol was well known; and relates, that in 1527 Montejo, then engaged in the conquest of Yucatan, was informed that a few years before the first arrival of the Spaniards in that country, a distinguished priest and prophet, called *Chilam Cambal*, predicted the speedy coming from the east of a race of white men, with beards, who would raise the sign of the cross, before which their native gods would flee; and that the strangers would subdue the country, but would cherish such of its inhabitants as should submit to their power, and abandoning the idols, should adore one only God, whom the conquerors worshipped: that he caused a large cotton cloth to be woven, and sacredly preserved as a sample of the tribute that would be exacted; and erected in the court



of one of the temples a stone cross, which he pronounced the true tree of the world, to be regarded by the people with religious veneration. Hence the inhabitants so earnestly inquired of Cordova whether he came from the place where the sun rises; and when on the entrance of Montejo into Yucatan, they beheld his adoration of the cross, they concluded that the predictions of their prophet were true. This story is so well adapted to promote Spanish interests, and the prophecy has so much the air of succeeding the event, that our scepticism on the subject may be readily excused.

LVII. From Cozumel, to which he gave the name of Santa Cruz, Grijalva passed to Potonchan, on the opposite coast of the Peninsula, surprized and delighted to observe many large and beautiful edifices of masonry with elevated points, which seemed white in the distance, and had the appearance of towers and pinnacles. From a fancied resemblance between this country and Castile, the Spaniards called it New Spain; which name, until the late revolution, distinguished the great empire of Mexico, to which Yucatan was adjacent. Grijalva effected a landing at Potonchan, with all his troops, under cover of his falconets, but not without a severe contest with the natives, whom the successful encounter with Cordova had rendered confident. The commander, and many of the soldiers, were wounded, though protected after the Indian manner by jackets of quilted cotton. On reaching the town, he found it deserted, and being unable to communicate with the natives, he returned on board the ships. Sailing round the peninsula, he next landed at the river Tobasco, which his people named Grijalva. The natives met him on the shore, in battle array; but they assumed a more pacific deportment, when assured by the prisoners, who had been captured by Cordova, that the

Spaniards meditated no injury. To the demands of the interpreters, that they should supply the squadron with provision, and should submit themselves to the king of Spain,—the Indian leaders replied, that they would willingly furnish their visitors with food ; but that having already a sovereign, to whom they owed allegiance, they could not conceive why just men should seek to impose another upon them. They added, that these demands should be reported to a council of the province, then in session ; and intimated that they had an ample force to resist invasion or punish depredation. Thus warned, Grijalva retired to his vessel, and soon after thirty Indians appeared, loaded with roasted fish, fowls, fruits, and bread, together with some ornamental presents, consisting of a mask of wood, and several articles beautifully wrought in feathers, for which they received some European cutlery and toys.

The next morning the Cacique of Tobasco, with his attendants unarmed, repaired to the squadron, and examined with curious attention the many novel objects around him. He presented Grijalva with a complete suit of armour, made of light boards plated with gold ; and many ornaments of the same metal, and others interwoven with feathers, and inlaid with precious stones, after the manner of Mosaic : the whole valued at three thousand pesos. In return for this rich donation, Grijalva clothed the chief with a shirt of fine linen, a suit of crimson velvet, and a pair of red shoes, and gave him a variety of toys, and useful articles of Spanish workmanship.

LVIII. From Tobasco, the Spanish commander followed the coast to the northwest. At the mouth of a river, which he called Banderas, (or the flags) a number of people invited him to land, waving long flags of white cloth attached to the points of

their spears. They received him with much respect, burnt incense of gum copal before him, presented him with bread, fruit, and fowls, and readily bartered wrought gold for European wares. This show of courtesy, the Spaniards afterwards learned, was by the express order of Montezuma, the sovereign of Mexico, in whose dominions they had now arrived, and to whom his officers had sent information, by means of pictures painted on cotton cloth, of the proceedings of Cordova, and of the arrival of Grijalva on the coast. Understanding the chief object of these visitors to be the exchange of their commodities for gold, he commanded his subjects to trade with them, and to ascertain what other purposes they had in view. Numerous prophecies had foretold the overthrow of the empire of this prince, by a race of warriors from the east, and he therefore very naturally entertained a lively and anxious curiosity in regard to these extraordinary strangers.

LIX. At some small islands west of the river Banderas, the Spaniards beheld the bloody evidence that the religion of the country was stained by human sacrifices. In one of the temples, the altars and walls were polluted with recent blood, and the bodies of five victims, cruelly mangled, were strewn on the pavement. In another, four priests, clad in long black mantles, were engaged in offering to their idols two boys, from whose bosoms they were cutting the yet palpitating hearts. One of these islands Grijalva called the Isle of Sacrifices, and another St. Juan de Ulloa. Thence he dispatched Peter Alvarado to Cuba, with the gold and various articles he had collected, and a full account of his discoveries.

LX. He pursued his voyage to the province of Panuco, along a coast chequered with towns and flourishing plantations, pleasing testimonials of a

numerous, skilful, and industrious population. He landed at several places, and performed the ceremonies usual with the Spaniards on taking possession of a country, demonstrating his confidence in the title of his sovereign to the soil of the new world, even when possessed by a state refined in policy, and advanced in civilization. Some of his officers considered, that in the present case, these ceremonies were useless forms, unless a colony were planted in some proper station, which might be the germ of the future power of Spain in this rich and extensive empire. Grijalva also inclined to this opinion. But the counsel of others more cautious, if not more prudent, prevailed. The squadron had been long at sea, its stores were nearly exhausted, the number of effective men was reduced by death or sickness, the rainy season was approaching, and the natives were not only numerous, but politic and warlike. In addition to these reasons, it is alleged that Grijalva had been privately but positively directed by Valasquez not to leave a colony behind him. If this were true, the governor's conduct was most disingenuous. The report of Alvarado gave him the most sanguine hopes with respect to Mexico; and that officer having recommended the establishment of a colony, represented the refusal of Grijalva as pusillanimous. We may remark, that the wisest caution which checked the zeal of enterprize, was subject to misconstruction in this age, when the spirit of adventure scorned the perils of battle, and the more discouraging labour of exploration, with its attendant sufferings of pestilence and famine. When Grijalva returned to Cuba, he had the mortification to find an expedition preparing for the conquest of Mexico, under another commander; and to receive instead of the thanks he merited, the angry reproaches of his superior. Valasquez, transported

by this success, immediately after the arrival of Alvarado, dispatched a confidential messenger to Spain, with the productions of the country he had discovered, to solicit an enlargement of power adapted to his future projects.

LXI. The communication by the western ocean with the East Indies, and the islands whence the Portuguese drew their valuable spices, which Ferdinand ardently desired, but was destined never to know, was opened to his fortunate successor. Although possessing the most lively zeal for maritime enterprize, the kings of Portugal refused some of the happiest opportunities of obtaining its highest honours and richest rewards. Their rejection of the services of Columbus had given to Spain the new world; and their ingratitude to another distinguished navigator, opened for that kingdom the way to the southern ocean around the continent of America. Hernandez de Magallenes, or Magellan, as the English writers call him, a noble subject of Portugal, who had accompanied Alfonso de Albuquerque to the East Indies, and had subsequently served against the Moors, being denied an adequate reward by Emmanuel, formally renounced his allegiance to the house of Braganza, and sought employment in Spain.\* He proffered to demonstrate to the ministers of Charles, that the Molucca, and other spice islands, were within the limits assigned to Spain by the papal bull, and to discover a passage thither by some strait through the western continent. This proposition was favourably received by Fonseca, and through his influence was adopted by the emperor, who bestowed on the proposer high marks of consideration; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Portuguese ambassadors, and their private efforts to regain Ma-

\* A. D. 1517.

gellan, entered into capitulations for the performance of the enterprize.\* To this agreement, Ruy Falero, a Portuguese astronomer and astrologer, who had also retired from the court of Lisbon in disgust, was a party, but in consequence of a dispute with Magellan for precedence, and an ill state of health, he did not embark with him. By these articles it was stipulated, that no other person, without the permission of Magellan, should, for the space of ten years, be permitted to visit the countries he might discover: That he should receive the twentieth of the net profits drawn from them; and if the islands discovered should be more than six in number, he should have the fifteenth part of the profits of two of them: That the government of such countries, with the title of Adelantado, should be vested in himself and his heirs, born in Spain: That he and they might send by the king's ships one thousand ducats in merchandize annually, and bring back the produce, paying the royal duties: That he should receive one-fifth of all the ships brought home in the present voyage; and that the emperor should furnish five ships, two of one hundred and thirty, two of ninety, and one of sixty tons, with two hundred and thirty-four people paid and victualled for two years.

LXII. This squadron left San Lucar on the 21st September, 1519, and touched at Teneriffe, whence it departed on the 3d of October following. After a long and troublesome passage, amid calms and storms, it arrived, on the 13th December, on the Rio Janeiro. The natives immediately came off in their canoes with fowls, parrots, and other birds, maize and fruits. They exchanged for a *face card* seven or eight fowls, and offered a *slave* for a hatchet, but Magellan forbade any addition of this

\* A. D. 1519.



kind to the number of his people, not only that he might avoid offence to the Portuguese, but that he might husband his provisions. He resumed his voyage on the 27th December; and on the 3d January, 1520, entered the Rio de Solis, so named after the unfortunate commander who perished here, but which Magellan called La Plata, the name by which it is now known. The natives generally avoided intercourse with the whites; one only visited the ships, who, being shown a cup of silver, intimated by signs that that metal abounded in the country.

LXIII. On the 6th February, in  $40^{\circ}$  S. L. Magellan discovered the gulf of Saint Matthew; where, not finding anchorage, he proceeded to another bay, called by his seamen *Las Patos*, from the abundance of geese found there; and on Easter Sunday made the river St. Julien in  $49\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  S. L. where he resolved to spend the winter of the southern hemisphere. This determination was not received by his people, already weary of the voyage, and desperate of its issue, without murmurs; and though with qualities which commanded respect and engaged affection, he was able to appease the impatience of the sailors, his officers proved refractory. The captains of two of the vessels, and several officers of a third, openly resisted his authority. On sending a boat to the ship St. Antonio to obtain some men, the boatmen were warned off by the watch, and informed that the captain and pilot had been confined, the master hanged, and that Gasper de Queseda was in command. Upon these tidings, Magellan ordered the boat to return to that, and the other ships, and to inquire for whom they were. Queseda replied, for the king and himself; Luis de Mendoza, of the Victoria, and Juan de Cartagena, who had already once been imprisoned for disobedience, gave a like answer. Juan Rodrigo

Serrano, of the San Jago, declared himself for the king and captain Magellan. Prompt and temerarious courage was perhaps the only proper remedy on this occasion; and the captain-general immediately preparing his ship, the Capitana, for battle, directed a boat with thirty chosen men, and five in the skiff, to the ship of Mendoza, with orders that the men in the skiff should board him, with a letter, and whilst he was engaged in the perusal, should stab him with their daggers. This was punctually executed, and the boat's crew entering immediately, the Victoria submitted, the major part of her people being friendly to Magellan. The Antonio was also easily conquered; her crew, refusing to second the efforts of Queseda, fled below, to avoid the fire of the Capitana. The Conception submitted without contest. The punishment of the mutinous officers was severe, but merited. The body of Mendoza was ignominiously quartered. Queseda was hung and dismembered by his own servant, who bought his life by becoming the executioner of his master. Cartagena was abandoned on this desert coast, and a French clergyman, who subsequently endeavoured to excite revolt, was condemned to share his fate. The inferior mutineers were pardoned.

LXIV. The cold in the bay of St. Julien was so severe, that several of the seamen lost their hands by the frost. The ground was covered with snow, and during the first two months no indication was seen of any inhabitants. At the end of that time, seven natives came on board the squadron, who were remarkable for their great bulk and height, the smallest being greater than the largest man in Spain. Nor was their appetite less extraordinary than their size; for being supplied with food, the seven ate a quantity usually allotted to twenty men.

They were clad in mantles of skins, and armed with bows and arrows pointed with flints.

LXV. When the winter was drawing to a close, Serrano was dispatched with one of the vessels to explore the coast. At twenty leagues south of St. Julien, he entered a river which he called Santa Cruz, where he employed himself for several days in fishing and getting seals. His vessel was driven on shore in a violent gale; and immediately went to pieces. The crew were saved, but were not able to rescue any thing from the wreck. They rejoined the squadron by a difficult and laborious journey over land, suffering severely from cold and hunger. Having remained in the bay of St. Julien from the commencement of April to the 24th of August, Magellan proceeded to Santa Cruz, where he remained until the close of October. Thence he held a southward course, amid continual storms, to the Cape de las Virgines, on the north coast of a deep indenture, through which a passage to the other sea appeared so probable, that he resolved to examine it. Two vessels were sent, singly, with orders to explore the inlet for five days. One reported that it was composed of shallow bays, surrounded by high banks; but the other, that it was certainly a strait, since she had sailed three days without discovering an issue; and the current increasing in rapidity, and stronger than the tides, must discharge itself through some opening of the land. Magellan concluded this to be the passage he sought, but prudently resolved to inspect it more closely before he ventured into it with his whole fleet. The St. Antonio performed this service, and finding no outlet after a voyage of fifty leagues, his opinion was confirmed; and he called a council of his officers to determine whether they should pass the strait. By their report the squadron had three months' provisions; and the general

opinion was in favour of continuing the voyage. But the pilot of the Antonio dissented, representing that any delay by calms or storms, would consume their short stock of provisions, and expose the fleet to inevitable destruction, and that having succeeded in finding the strait, it would be most prudent to return to Spain, and obtain another squadron for passing it. But Magellan declaring that he would eat the hides of his rigging sooner than abandon the enterprize, and forfeit the pledge he had given the emperor, issued immediate orders for prosecuting the voyage. Before quitting the entrance of the strait, he sent a party on shore to view the country, who discovered at a short distance a house, in which were more than two hundred sepulchres, where the Indians, visiting the sea-shore in the summer season, were accustomed to bury their dead. On the strand, the party saw the dead body of a large whale, and many bones of the same animal, whence Magellan inferred that the place was subject to great tempests. The shore was rugged and cold, and from the fires kindled by the natives at night, he named the country *Terra del Fuego*.

LXVI. On proceeding further, he discovered another branch of the sea, which he directed the St. Antonio to explore, and to return in three days. With the other vessels he continued his course for one day, and then cast anchor to await her report. After the lapse of six days, she not appearing, he dispatched the Victoria in quest of her; and after a further delay of three days, he, with the remainder of the squadron, joined the latter vessel in the search, in which he fruitlessly spent six more days. A loss of time which he deeply regretted, on account of his limited stock of provisions. Resuming his voyage to the westward, after twenty days, on the 27th November, 1520, he entered the

Great South Sea, giving thanks to God that he had been the first to discover the western passage to India, which had been so long and ardently sought.

LXVII. The *St. Antonio* endeavoured to rejoin the squadron, and had anchored at a port to which Magellan had given the name of *Sadinas*, on account of the many fish of that kind he had caught there. Having fired guns, and made other signals without effect, the captain, *Mesquita*, would have made further quest for the general, but was prevented by the pilot *Gomez*, a Portuguese, and the recorder *Guerra*, whom Magellan had made treasurer. They seized, stabbed, and imprisoned the captain, under pretence that he had been a chief counsellor of the punishment inflicted on the rebellious officers. Commanded by *Guerra*, the ship returned by the coast of Guinea to Spain, and arrived at *St. Lucar* at the close of the month of March, 1521. Having by torture compelled *Mesquita* to support what they chose to relate, the mutineers endeavoured to defend themselves by accusing Magellan of great cruelty, which, they said, was induced by representations made to him of delay and mismanagement in the progress of the voyage. They delivered their prisoner to the public authorities, who, upon examination of all the crew, deemed it expedient to commit him and the mutineers to the custody of the law, until more full information could be obtained; and to inform the council and governors of the Indies of the fate of *Mendoza*, *Quesada*, and *Cartagena*. For the rescue of the latter, immediate orders were given.

LXVIII. The strait, which bears the name of its discoverer, is a hundred leagues from mouth to mouth, bordered by high and rugged shores, and which in many places are not more than a cannon-shot distant from each other. Upon entering the southern ocean, Magellan followed the coast of the

continent to the northward, exposed to violent tempests, until the 18th of December, when he reached  $32\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  of southern latitude. As he approached the warm climates the wind became large, and as he had it aft, he directed his course N.W. and W.N.W. till he reached the line. He followed this course for more than thirty days, during which his crews suffered so severely from the want of provisions and water, that many became sick, and twenty of them perished. At the end of that time, he discovered two small uninhabited islands, which he called *Las Desventuradas*, or the Unfortunate Islands, because he found here neither inhabitants nor refreshment.\*

LXIX. Chagrined, but not discouraged, he pursued his way through the immense ocean for eight hundred leagues, until the 20th of January, when, in south lat.  $15^{\circ} 48'$ , he fell in with two beautiful islands, inhabited by a rude people, who worshipped idols, and who navigated in canoes, furnished with latine sails of the palm-tree, the eight leagues which separated the one island from the other. These small islands yielded but a scanty supply of provisions for his people, now reduced to the last state of destitution, and who had for weeks subsisted on an allowance of food barely sufficient to sustain life, and were also suffering under the scurvy, the most baleful disease to which seamen are subjected. His communication with the inhabitants, too, was interrupted by deeds of violence to which their ferocity and cupidity gave rise. So powerful with them was this latter passion, that though many of their countrymen were slain by the artillery of the ships, the survivors still sought to traffic with the strangers. From these islands, called by the Spaniards *Las Velas Latinas*, the

\* Herrera, Dec. 2. lib. 9. ch. 15.



squadron proceeded by the same course three hundred leagues, to a large group of islets, whence, piloted by a petty prince of the country, it reached Zebu, one of the chief of the Philippine Islands, abounding with inhabitants, and stocked with rich fruits and other products of the Tropics. Having contracted a firm peace with one of the kings of Zebu, by the singular ceremony of drinking each other's blood, Magellan obtained a speedy and full supply of provisions, by which his people were immediately restored to health.

LXX. This island was divided among several chiefs or kings, one of whom embraced the Christian faith, and declared himself the vassal of the crown of Castile. He being at war with his neighbours, Magellan, desirous at once of displaying his power and acquiring additional subjects for the emperor, required the other princes also to acknowledge his supremacy. Two of them immediately complied; but others treating his commands with contempt, he made a nocturnal excursion into their territories, whence he retired with considerable plunder. But in a subsequent attempt, contrary to the advice of his officers, to subjugate the sovereign of the adjacent island of Mata, this adventurous and able navigator fell a victim to his injustice, being overpowered and slain in combat. Upon his death, Duarte Barbosa was elected general, who, with rash confidence, ventured on shore with a small party of seamen to receive from the Christian king a tributary present to the emperor, and was slaughtered by the united forces of all the chiefs of Zebu, the Christian king having been compelled by the others to join for his destruction. The loss of men which the squadron had sustained, now rendering it impossible to navigate the three vessels in safety, they retired to a neighbouring island,

where one was destroyed, and the remainder put under the command of Juan Carvallo.

LXXI. Under the direction of this officer, the Spaniards visited several islands in the great Indian archipelago; amongst others, that of Borneo; and at length, on the 8th November, 1521, they made the island of *Tidore*, one of the Moluccas, to the surprize of the Portuguese, who could not comprehend how they had gained this seat of their most valuable commerce by a western route. Here, and in the adjacent isles, the Spaniards found a people acquainted with the benefits of trade, and willing to open an intercourse with a new nation. Laden with a rich cargo of spices, and the distinguished productions of the other islands she had visited, the Victory, which was, of the two ships, best fitted for a long voyage, set sail for Europe, under the command of Juan Sebastian del Cano, in January, 1522. He followed the course of the Portuguese, by the Cape of Good Hope, and, after many disasters and sufferings, arrived at San Lucar on the seventh of September, having circumnavigated the globe in three years and twenty-eight days. Thus the Spanish nation acquired, in addition to the honour of discovering the western hemisphere, that of first determining, by experiment, the form and extent of the planet which we inhabit.

LXXII. It does not fall within our design, to trace particularly the history of the Spanish efforts consequent on the discoveries of Magellan; but we may be indulged in narrating the result of their endeavours to appropriate to themselves the trade of the spice islands, which they had so ardently desired, since it affords a striking example of the mutability of human purposes. The scientific men of Spain contended, that the Moluccas, and several other of the richest countries of the East, fell to the Spanish crown under the partition of Alex-

ander VI. Her merchants eagerly engaged in the lucrative and alluring commerce now opened to them. The Portuguese resisted these encroachments, by remonstrance and negotiation in Europe, and in Asia by the force of arms. The emperor, absorbed by his many schemes and operations, and unable to extend proper protection to his subjects, was at length induced, by the low state of his finances, to assign his claim to the Moluccas to the Portuguese for three hundred and fifty thousand ducats. He reserved, however, to the crown of Castile, the right of reviving its pretensions on repayment of that sum. But this money was never repaid, and Spain was finally excluded from a branch of commerce, in which she had engaged with sanguine expectations of profit.\*

\* 2 Robertson's America, 57.

## CHAPTER III.

- I. *View of the West Indies. Improper generalization of authors in describing America.* . . . II. *Geographical notice of the West Indies.* . . . III. *Of the Gulf, or Florida stream.* . . . IV. *Transparency of the sea.* . . . V. *Fresh-water springs in the sea.* . . . VI. *Mountains of the West Indies.* . . . VII. *Geology of the islands imperfectly known.* . . . VIII. *Climate and seasons.* . . . IX. *Land and sea breezes.* . . . X. *Hurricanes.* . . . XI. *Of the inhabitants. Two distinct races.* . . . XII. *Of the Charaibe race.*
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I. HAVING now traced the course of the Spanish discoveries, until the vast continents of North and South America, and the great chain of the West India Islands were made known to Europe, we may pause and take a view of the New World more particular than could be conveniently given in the foregoing narrative.

In the performance of a similar labour, other writers have compressed into one view the whole western hemisphere, notwithstanding it comprizes every variety of climate, great diversity of animal and vegetable life, and almost every modification of physical and moral circumstances which serve to form the human character. It is scarce possible,

in such a course, to avoid confusion, obscurity, and error; though it be pursued with a mind unprejudiced, and honestly disposed to seek for truth. But if an author have a preconceived system to maintain, his facts will be discoloured or perverted; and the reader is in danger of carrying with him, throughout the work, the false conceptions of the writer. Thus, some European writers on American history, having assumed the hypothesis that the New World, especially in its animal productions, is inferior to the old, have, in order to support it, violated truth and justice, in many essential particulars relative to the character of the aboriginal inhabitants, and the description of the lower orders of animal nature. We shall have occasion, hereafter, to adduce many instances in support of this accusation.

Avoiding the course which we have thus condemned, we shall divide the great picture of America into several scenes, and consider them as they depend upon distinctive physical and moral principles, upon the variety of climate, and degrees of civilization. In conformity with this plan, we now confine ourselves to a general view of the West India islands only—having, in relation to them, all the information which is attainable; and having narrated the history of their inhabitants, from the time of their discovery until the work of their extinction had made frightful progress. These islands, then, may be considered in reference to their climate, their geological construction, and their animal and vegetable productions.

II. The group of islands, in form of an arch, between the two continents of America, extend from the gulf of Florida to that of Venezuela. They were at first called Antilles, and have been vaguely denominated the West Indies, in consequence of the error of Columbus. Modern geogra-



phers, from respect to his memory, have denominated them the Columbian Archipelago. The term Great Antilles is still applied to Cuba, Jamaica, St. Domingo, and Porto Rico, whilst the groups to the south of these are sometimes called the Less Antilles. The English, the French, and the Spaniards, have affixed different meanings to the terms Windward and Leeward Islands; the acceptation of this nautical phrase depending on the position of the navigator, and the tract which he proposes to follow.

III. That part of the ocean between these islands, South America and the coasts of Mosquitos, Costa Rica, and Darien, is called the Caribbean Sea, and is remarkable for several phenomena, among which, the currents traversing it merit our particular attention. The gentle motion of the Atlantic between the tropics, first noted by Columbus, is steady and uniform, at the rate of nine or ten miles every twenty-four hours, and is generally known as the equinoctial current. Between the Canary Islands and the mouth of the Orinoco, the ocean through which it flows is so calm and free from storms, that the Spaniards have given it the name of the Ladies' Sea.

The new continent forms a barrier to the further westward progress of the current, which, changing its direction, at Veragua, to the northward, bends into all the windings of the coasts of Mosquitos, Costa Rica, and Honduras, and enters the Gulf of Mexico through the strait formed by Cape Catoche and Saint Antonio. Thence it follows the sinuosities of the Mexican shores, from Vera Cruz to the Rio del Norte, and the mouths of the Mississippi, and thence to the southern point of Florida. At length, having made the circuit of the compass, the current turns again to the north, and rushes into the ocean through the Bahama channel, with

great impetuosity, having, under the parallel of Cape Cannaveral, the velocity of a torrent, running about five miles the hour. It is now known as the Gulf or Florida stream. From this point its swiftness diminishes as its width increases. Between the parallels of Charleston and Cape Henlopen, it is from forty to fifty leagues wide, and runs from three to five miles the hour. In the latitude of New-York, the temperature of the stream is equal to that of the sea at Porto Rico and the Cape de Verd Islands. In the meridian of Halifax, it expands to eighty maritime leagues in width, and changes its course to the east, touching with its margin the extremity of the banks of Newfoundland, called, by Volney, the bar of this enormous maritime river. Thence it flows to the Azores, and, at Corvo and Flores, has a width of one hundred and sixty leagues. It divides itself here into two branches, one of which is impelled, at certain seasons of the year, towards Norway and Iceland; and the other seeks the strait of Gibraltar and the Madeira and Canary Islands, and continuing a south-eastwardly course, pours itself upon the coast of Africa, between Cape Cantin and Cape Bojador; having thus made the full circuit of the Atlantic ocean. This course of the stream accounts for the trunks of tropical trees, the dead bodies of Indians, and other matters from the New World, which have been discovered on the Azore and Canary Islands.

This stream is recognized by the navigator by the beautiful blue of its waters, and its temperature; being, throughout, hotter than its watery banks. It carries from the Gulf of Mexico the heat of tropical waters, which gradually diminishes as it proceeds towards the north. On the banks of Newfoundland, it is about two or three degrees of Reaumer warmer than the waters near the shore.

IV. Another remarkable phenomenon of the Ca-

ribean Sea, is its transparency, which is so great, that the fish and coral may be discerned at sixty fathoms below the surface. The ship seems to float in air; and the spectator is often seized with vertigo, whilst he beholds, through the crystal fluid, submarine groves, and beautiful shells, glittering among tufts of fucus and sea-weed.

V. Fresh-water springs issue from the sea, on both sides of the channel, between Yucatan and Cuba. The latter rise from the bay of Xagua, about three marine miles from the western coast of Cuba. They rush with so much violence out of the deep, that it is dangerous for small vessels to approach them; boats have been dashed to pieces by the force of the surge. Ships on the coast sail thither sometimes for a supply of fresh water, which the seamen draw from the bottom of the ocean. The freshness of the water, too, as may easily be supposed, depends on the depth from which it is drawn. Humboldt remarks, that some of the fish in these springs have never been found in salt water.\*

VI. There are mountains on all the islands of this archipelago. The highest are situated on the west of St. Domingo, the east of Cuba, and the north of Jamaica; or on that part of the group where these numerous islands approach nearest to each other.

From a general survey, the direction of these mountains seems to be from northwest to southeast; but after examining minutely the best maps of each island, it is not difficult to discover in most of them a centre, from which the rivers descend; and that the different mountains unite in a nucleus. The volcanoes that have been observed at Guadeloupe, and some other islands, emanate from these central points, which are most commonly composed

\* *Tableaux de la Nature*, tom. 11. p. 235.

of granite in the Less, and of calcareous rocks in the Greater Antilles.

VII. The geology of the West Indies is as yet imperfectly known. It has been ascertained, that the most extensive plains, on the smaller islands, are situated towards the eastern coast;\* but this remark is not applicable to the Great Antilles and the Virgin Isles. The great number resemble each other only in their steep rocks, and in the abrupt transitions from the mountains to the plains, which are so remarkable in St. Domingo, that the French settlers have made use of a new word† to denote these craggy heights.

Coral, or Madrepore rocks, are very common off the different coasts, and it may perhaps be discovered, that this substance has contributed as much to the formation of the Indian archipelago, as to any of the islands in the great ocean. Cuba and the Bahamas are surrounded by labyrinths of low rocks, several of which are covered with palm-trees, which tend to confirm the supposition, as they have the same appearance as some of the coral islands in the eastern ocean.‡

VIII. Most of the West India islands, being situated beneath the tropic of Cancer, have the same circumstances of climate, as well in regard to heat as to periodical rains, and consequent variation of seasons. The temperature of the air may vary with the elevation of land, but, with this exception, the medium degree of heat is much the same in all. A tropical year comprehends but two distinct seasons; the wet and the dry. But as the rains constitute two great periods, it may be described like the European year, under four great divisions.§

\* Leblond, Voyage aux Antilles.

† Morne.

‡ Malte Brun Geog.

§ For a considerable part of the following description of the West Indies, I am indebted to the history of Mr. Bryan Edwards.

The spring may be said to commence with the month of May, when the foliage of the trees becomes more vivid, and the parched Savannahs begin to change their russet hue, even previous to the first periodical rains, which are now daily expected, and generally set in about the middle of the month. Compared with the autumnal rains, these are mere showers. They come from the south, and commonly fall every day about noon, and break up with thunder storms; creating a bright and beautiful verdure, and a rapid and luxuriant vegetation. The thermometer, at this season, varies considerably; usually falling six or eight degrees immediately after the diurnal rains; its medium height may be stated at seventy-five degrees of Fahrenheit.

After these rains have continued about fourteen days, the weather becomes dry, settled, and salutary; and the tropical summer reigns in full glory. Not a cloud is to be perceived, and the sky blazes with irresistible fierceness. For some hours, commonly between seven and ten in the morning, the heat is scarce supportable; but no sooner is the influence of the sea-breeze or trade-wind felt, which, at this season, blows from the southeast with great force and regularity until late in the evening, than all nature revives, and the temperature in the shade becomes not only tolerable, but pleasant. The thermometer now varies but little during the whole twenty-four hours; its medium near the coast is about eighty degrees, being seldom observed at noon to rise higher than eighty-five, or to sink lower than seventy-five, at sunrise.

The nights at this period are transcendantly beautiful. The clearness and brilliancy of the heavens, the serenity of the air, and the soft tranquillity in which all nature reposes, contribute to harmonize the mind, and produce the most calm and delightful sensations. The moon too displays far greater

radiance than in more northern climes: the smallest print is legible by her light—and her absence is well supplied by the brightness of the milky-way, and the glorious planet Venus. The latter seems a diminutive moon, shining with such refulgent ray as to cast a shade from intervening objects, and making full amends for the short stay and abrupt departure of the twilight. In the mountainous and interior parts of the larger islands, innumerable fire-flies of different species abound at night. Some of which emit a light resembling a spark of fire, from a globular prominence near either eye, and others from their sides in the act of respiration. They are far more luminous than the glow-worm, and fill the air on all sides, like so many living stars, to the surprize and admiration of the stranger.

This delightful state of the weather continues with little variation, from the commencement of June until the middle of August, when the diurnal breeze begins to intermit, and the atmosphere becomes sultry, incommodious, and suffocating. During the latter end of this month, and the greater part of September, coolness and comfort are sought in vain. The thermometer occasionally exceeds ninety degrees, and in place of a steady and refreshing breeze, light airs and calms alternate. These are precursors of the second periodical or autumnal rains. Large towering clouds, fleecy, and of a reddish hue, are now seen in the morning, in the south and southwest, whilst the tops of the mountains are free of clouds, and the objects upon them wear a blueish cast, and seem nearer than usual to the spectator. When these accumulated vapours have arisen high in the atmosphere, they move horizontally towards the mountains, proclaiming their progress in deep and rolling thunder, which reverberated from peak to peak, and answered



by the distant roaring of the sea, heightens the majesty of the scene, and irresistibly lifts the mind of the observer to the great Author of all sublimity.

The waters, however, with which the atmosphere is loaded, seldom fall with great and general force, until the beginning of October. Then the heavens pour down cataracts. A stranger can form no conception of the quantity of rain which deluges the earth at this season. By an exact account kept in Jamaica, there appears to have fallen in one year, and that not a remarkable one, sixty-seven inches. Generally, towards the end of November, but sometimes not till the middle of December, a change in the temperature of the air is perceivable. The coasts to the northward are beaten by a rough and heavy sea, roaring with incessant noise. The wind varies from the northeast to north, sometimes driving before it, across the highest mountains, not only heavy rains, but hail; till at length the north wind having acquired sufficient force, the atmosphere is cleared; and then follows a succession of serene and pleasant weather; the northeast and northerly winds spreading coolness and delight throughout the whole of this burning region. If the interval between the first of December and the end of April be called winter, it is certainly the finest winter on the globe. To valetudinarians, and persons advanced in life, it is the climate of paradise.

The foregoing is to be received as a general description only, subject to many variations and exceptions. In the larger islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Jamaica, whose lofty mountains are clothed with forests, as old perhaps as the deluge, the rains are much more frequent and violent than in the small islands to windward;—some of which are without mountains, and others without wood, both powerful agents on the atmosphere. In the interior and elevated districts of the greater islands,

there are showers in every month in the year; and on the northern coasts considerable rains are expected in December and January, soon after the setting in of the northern winds.

IX. We have already observed that the fierce influence of the sun is tempered by the sea and land breezes, which alternate day and night. The latter, however, is peculiar to the larger and mountainous islands, and proceeds from the great inequality of their surface; for as soon as the sea-breeze dies away, the hot air of the plains being rarefied, ascends towards the top of the mountains, and is there condensed by the cold, and becoming specifically heavier than it was before, it descends to the plains on both sides the ridge. Hence a night wind is felt in all the mountainous countries under the torrid zone, blowing on all sides from the land towards the shore; so that on a north shore, the wind shall come from the south, and on the south shore, from the north. Agreeably to this hypothesis, it is observable, that in the islands to windward, where there are no mountains, there is no land-breeze; and even in Jamaica, in the months of June and July, the sea-breeze blows as well by night as by day; the land at that time being heated to such a degree, that the cold air of the mountains is not sufficiently dense to check the current which flows from the sea.

The atmospheric air, obedient to the laws of attraction, follows the sun, between the tropics, in an invariable course from east to west.\* Proceeding across the ancient continent, the wind arrives at the Atlantic ocean, heated by the sultry plains of Asia, and the burning sands of the African deserts, and pours upon the western coast of Africa the unmitigated ardour of the torrid zone. But in traversing

\* *Reflections sur la cause general des vents.* D'Alembert.

the sea, it is cooled before it reaches the American shores, and is there felt as a refreshing gale, moderating the fervour of the sun, and dispelling the languor which his untempered rays produce.\*

X. From the middle of July to the end of October, the West Indies, and particularly the Antilles, are exposed to hurricanes. But these dreadful visitants are not always annual; intervals of several years sometimes occur between them. Still they are sufficiently frequent to be objects of just apprehension to the inhabitants, and those who visit them for commercial purposes.

After a long continuance of dry weather, and usually after a close day, during which the air has been perfectly calm, and so clear, that the tops of the highest mountains may be distinctly seen—always between sunset and sunrise—the wind rises suddenly, with frightful force, which rapidly increases. The rain soon follows in torrents; and the lightning illumines the canopy from the zenith to the horizon, with almost unbroken glare, whilst the thunder bursts in astounding peals from every quarter. The sea, which for some days has rolled upon the coast with a high and sullen swell, emitting a strong and disagreeable odour, now lashed into irresistible fury, roars in tremendous concert; and the waves alternately menace the sky, or plunge into the bottomless abyss. The Genius of desolation roams unmanacled, and all nature bends before him. The lofty palm, the firm-rooted Acajou, and the wide-spread fig-tree, are torn from the soil, or riven by the red bolt of heaven; and the humble shrub and creeping *lienne* are beaten down, and blended with the mire. Every human fabric dreads his presence. The slight and lowly cabin disappears at his approach, with little injury, perhaps, to

\* Robertson's Am. 237. 1 Edw. West Ind.

its terrified tenant; whilst the stronger edifice, which by any crevice admits his entrance, is toppled on the heads of the occupants, and frequently wrapped in dreadful conflagration.

Still the fury of the wind increases—sometimes shifting from quarter to quarter; at others, blowing with equal violence from every point of the compass, until the deep and ponderous earth awakens to the strife, and rocking to the blast, adds new and indescribable horrors to the scene. 'Then the feeble protection of walls and roofs is abandoned, and the affrighted inmates rush to the most naked spot of the adjacent fields, as the place of the greatest safety. A desperate refuge! The mountains have poured down their cataracts—the rivers have overleaped or broken their banks, and universal inundation covers the plains. After five or six hours, each of which seems an age, the fury of the elements abates, a comparative calm, though yet a storm, succeeds, which permits the proprietor to raise his head to survey his manifold losses—his fields and gardens submerged and devastated—his habitation prostrate, and every object he lately delighted to view, involved in mingled ruin. In a few hours more, the thick veil is withdrawn from the heavens—the sun shines with a new and softened splendour, the air is balmy and invigorating—but the effects of the tempest remain, which require years of industry to efface.

The immediate cause of these dreadful scourges is not fully understood, or at least is not universally acknowledged. Electricity is supposed to be a powerful agent in their creation. But the motion of the earth, and variation of temperature in the atmosphere, the source of other winds, seem sufficient for the production of these. Nature, we must presume, does nothing in vain, and though we are unable to trace any immediate beneficial results

from the irregular and terrific visits of the hurricane, we cannot doubt that they are indispensable and beneficial in the economy of Providence.

XI. We have seen that the West India Islands were divided between two races of inhabitants, strikingly distinguished, both in their physical and moral character. The one, fierce and warlike, remarkable for courage and cruelty, fortitude, and enterprize, occupied the windward islands, and were known and dreaded under the name of Caribs, or Charaibes, which, in their language, was synonymous with war and violence. The other, which dwelt in Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, Porto Rico, Bahama, and adjacent islands, as remarkable for their mild and pacific disposition and comparative cultivation, were called Arrowauks. The great difference in the language and character of these two people, is conclusive as to the difference of their origin; but, whence each race was derived, is a question of difficult solution.\*

XII. 1. Historians have generally concurred in supposing, that the insular Caribs were originally a nation of Florida; and that having been thence expelled by their enemies, they seized on the windward islands, exterminated the ancient male inhabitants, and appropriated the women to themselves: that the larger islands, which they also assailed, were preserved from a similar fate by their great extent and population; but that the constant attacks of the restless Carib produced and perpetuated the inveterate enmity which the races bore to each other.† But there is sufficient cause to doubt the correctness of this derivation, since no trace of the progress of the Caribs from the northern continent has been found in the islands, near the

\* Rochefort. Hist. of the Caribbee Islands, lib. 2. ch. 11.

† Ibid. P. Labat's *nouveau Voyages aux iles de l'Amerique*, tom. 4. ch. 15. Edward's *West Ind.* vol. 1.

Florida shore; the natives of the Bahamas, when discovered by Columbus, being evidently a similar people to those of Hispaniola. Besides, it is sufficiently known, that there existed, anciently, powerful tribes of Caribs on the southern peninsula, extending from the Oronoko to Essequibo, and throughout the whole province of Surinam, even to Brazil; some of which still maintain their independence. With one of these tribes Sir Walter Raleigh formed an alliance, during his romantic expedition to the coast of Guiana, in 1595; and by him we are assured, that the Caribs of that country spoke the language of Dominica.\*† To this we must add, that the traditions of the insular Caribs constantly refer to Guiana as the place of their origin, and to a tribe called, by Dr. Robertson and other writers, *Galibis*, an obvious corruption of Caribis, as their parent stock.‡

Another opinion relative to the origin of the Carib race, has been promulgated by authority so respectable, that we feel bound to notice it. "I conceive," says Mr. Edwards, "the Charaibes to have been a distinct race, widely differing from all the nations of the new hemisphere; and I am even inclined to adopt the opinion of Hornius,§ and other writers, who ascribe to them an oriental ancestry, from across the Atlantic." In support of this hypothesis, the author relies upon the dissimilarity of the Caribs to the other American races, their physical correspondence, and the identity of portions of their language, and many of their cus-

\* Hackluyt. Rochefort, ib. 1 Robertson's Am. n. 94. Du Tertre, vol. 2. p. 360. Lafitau, vol. 1. p. 297.

† Boturini conjectures that the *Olmecas*, an ancient tribe of Mexico, when driven from their country by the Tlascalans, sought refuge in the Caribbee Islands and in South America. 1 Clavig. Mex. lib. 2.

‡ Rochefort, lib. 2. ch. 7.

§ De Originibus Americanis lib. 2. ch. 6.



toms, with those of Asiatic nations. Confiding in the well established historical fact, that the navigation of the Atlantic ocean along the coast of Africa, even at a considerable distance from the land, was well understood, and prevailed in very remote ages, he deems that, from the nature of the winds and currents on that coast, and the casualties to which ships at sea are liable, even in the most favourable season of the year, "that it not only probably happened, but even that it *was scarce possible not to happen*, that vessels would be driven by sudden gusts, or carried by adverse currents, within the verge of the trade-winds; in which case, if they chanced to lose their masts, they must necessarily run before the wind towards Brazil or the West Indies."\*

To this opinion the arguments and assertions of Dr. Robertson are directly opposed. That eminent writer contends as for "a certain principle, that America was not peopled by any nation of the ancient continent which had made considerable progress in civilization," since "even the most cultivated nations of America were strangers to many of those simple inventions, which were almost coeval with society in other parts of the world, and were known in the earliest period of civil life with which we have any acquaintance." And "although," he continues, "the elegant and refined arts may decline or perish, amidst the violent shocks of those revolutions and disasters to which nations are exposed, the necessary arts of life, when once they have been introduced among any people, are never lost."† Against these arguments Mr. Edwards, prudently perhaps, has not combated; but he has fully overthrown the inference of the American historian, that the western world could not

\* 1 Edw. West Ind. 30. 111.

† 1 Robert. Am. lib. 4.

have received inhabitants from the ancient continent, by ships accidentally driven from their course. "Such events," says the latter, "are barely possible, and may have happened. That they ever did happen we have no evidence, either from the clear testimony of history, or from the obscure intimations of tradition."\*

That such events *might* have happened in remote ages, cannot now be questioned, since we have the most satisfactory evidence that they have happened in modern times. We are told by Peter Martyr, that, at a place called Quarequa, in the gulf of Darien, Basco Nunez met with *a colony of negroes*, which, from the smallness of its numbers, was supposed not to have been long on the coast. Doubtless some accidental cause had conducted them thither from Africa, and in open canoes, of no better construction than those of the American Indians.†† An instance, still more recent, is related by Captain Glass, in his history of the Canary Islands, of a small bark bound from Lancerota to Teneriffe, which was forced from her course, and obliged to run before the wind until she came within two days' sail of Caracas: where she fortunately met with an English cruizer, which relieved her distress, and directed her to the port of Lagaira. Another case is told by Gumilla as follows: "In December, 1731, while I was at the town of St. Joseph in Trinidad, a small vessel belonging to Teneriffe, with six seamen, was driven into that island by stress of weather. She was laden with wine, and being bound to one other of the Canary Islands, had provisions for a few days only, which, with

\* 1 Robert. Am. lib. 4.

† P. Martyr, Dec. iii. c. 1. Edw. W. I. vol. I. p. 118.

† We fear that the fact of the existence of this negro colony, is too feebly sustained to have much force in the argument. But one well-authenticated instance of a vessel being driven from the African to the American coast is sufficient.

their utmost care, had been expended a considerable time, so that the crew lived entirely on wine. They were reduced to the last extremity, and expected death every moment, when they discovered Trinidad, and soon after came to an anchor in that island, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants, who ran in crowds to behold the poor seamen, whose emaciated appearance would have sufficiently confirmed the truth of their relation, even if the papers and documents which they produced had not put the matter beyond all possible doubt.”\*

To these cases we may add the accidental discovery of Brazil by Cabral; in remarking on which, Dr. Robertson observes, “that chance might have accomplished that great design, (the discovery of America) which it is now the pride of human reason to have formed and perfected. If the sagacity of Columbus had not conducted mankind to America, Cabral, by a fortunate accident, might have led them, a few years later, to the knowledge of that extensive continent.”† In truth, such accidents are common in all parts of the world. The inhabitants of Java report their origin to have been from China; the tradition among them being, that, about nine hundred years ago, their progenitors were driven by a tempest upon that island, in a Chinese junk. And we owe the European discovery of Japan to three Portuguese exiles, who were shipwrecked there in 1542.‡

But, it must be confessed, that the means of tracing the relations between the Caribs of the islands and the natives of the eastern continent, if such relations existed, are inconsiderable and uncertain. Their destroyers, if capable of making the investigation, scarce left themselves time for the pur-

\* Edw. West Indies, vol. 1. p. 117.

† 1 Hist. of America, vol. 1. p. 140.

‡ Edw. W. I. vol. 1. p. 118.

pose, so rapidly did they complete their work of annihilation. Nor are we now competent to judge correctly of the character of this people. Hunted by the Spaniards, like beasts of prey, from island to island, few opportunities were afforded of investigating their history, before their entire subjugation. And since that event, it would be vain and unjust to decide upon their original characteristics. For is it possible to judge truly of the genius of a people oppressed by perpetual fear, whose bodies are fettered, and whose minds are subjected to the absolute authority of their masters? The change which these circumstances wrought in their character became obvious to themselves. "Our people," said an ancient Indian to a planter, "are become almost as bad as yours. We are so much altered since you came among us, that we hardly know ourselves; and we think it is owing to so melancholy a change, that hurricanes are more frequent than formerly. It is some evil spirit that has done this—who has taken our best lands from us, and given us up to the dominion of the Christians."\*

2. The Caribs, as we have already remarked, were fierce and warlike; and these qualities, which were conspicuously displayed at their first encounter with the Spaniards, on the second voyage of Columbus, had, with their horrible cannibal propensities, rendered them the dread of the other Indian race.† The execrable practice of eating the flesh of their enemies taken in battle, prevailed among several nations of America. With some, as the tribes of Louisiana and other countries of North America, it was the rare consequence of extravagant revenge; with others, as in Mexico, it was a general and religious custom—the captive was immolated in the temple, his head and heart

\* Rochefort, lib. ii. ch. ix.

† See page 147. vol. 1.

devoted to the Gods, and his body borne off to feast the conqueror and his friends. These instances are ascribable to a perverted moral sense; but the appetite of the Carib was wholly carnal. It cannot be urged in his defence, that he was moved by a desire of vengeance, or by mistaken piety;—for he not only ate the bodies of his prisoners casually taken in war, but like the beasts of the forests, he considered the human race as his natural prey, and made war that he might thereby procure this abominable food. The victim was regularly fatted, and duly prepared for slaughter, and the carcase was providently stored for future use. This depraved and horrid appetite was common to the Caribs of the islands and of the continent, and still prevails among the latter.\* Yet an appetite so ferocious was controlled and bounded by sexual feeling. The women whom they captured were never slain nor eaten, but were preserved as slaves, or for the gratification of desires more natural and excusable.†

Among themselves the Caribs were peaceable, and towards each other faithful, friendly, and affectionate. And though their enmity against the Arrowauks was inveterate and invincible, yet when they gave their confidence to the Europeans, it was without reserve. Like other savage nations, long accustomed to unqualified freedom, they had a high sense of independence, and an utter abhorrence not only of slavery, but of that deferential respect which the natives of civilized countries are accustomed to pay to their superiors. Hence, when torn from their native islands, and carried into slavery, as they frequently were, they either pined to death, or sought refuge in suicide from the calamities of

\* Bancroft's History of Guiana, p. 259. Edw. W. I. vol. 1. 33. Humboldt's Voyage.

† Rochefort.

their condition. Such was their sensibility, that it became proverbial among the first French settlers, "*Regarder de travers un Carib c'est le battre et que de le battre c'est le tuer ou s'exposer à en être tué.*" "To look askance upon a Carib was to beat him; and to beat him, was to kill him, or expose oneself to be killed."\* Robertson, after Du Tertre, very properly considers this sensitiveness as common to all the American savages. (It was different with the half-civilized Mexicans, Peruvians, and other nations reduced under political government.) And he reports the following saying among the French islands, which discriminates between the character of the American and the African. "To avert your regards from a savage is to beat him; to beat him is to kill him. But to beat a negro is to nourish him."† The Caribs scorned, or were unable to appreciate the inventions of civilized life; and unlike the natives of Haiti, who were highly delighted with European toys, they regarded the arts and manufactures, (fire-arms excepted, the value of which they had dearly learned) as the amusements and baubles of children; hence the propensity of theft, common among other savages, was unknown to them.‡

Constantly disposed to war, and frequently engaged in its exercises, the Carib was restless and melancholy; and having his mind filled with the love of military glory, notwithstanding the incentives of climate, and abundance of food, he was cold and insensible to sexual impulses. The power of love is known to be feeble among many savage nations; and it has been erroneously assumed to have been universally so among the American tribes. But here, as in other countries, this passion depended upon the circumstances of climate, ease,

\* Labat. tom. 2. p. 74.

† Robert. Am. vol. 1. note 63.

‡ Labat. tom. iv. p. 329. Rochefort. 1 Edw. W. I. p. 35.



and food, and consequently varied from gross indulgence to extreme abstinence, from the fervour of a tropical sun to the torpor of a Canadian frost. The Caribs, however, supply us with an instance of the controlling force of moral over physical causes, and of the capacity of one powerful passion, like the rod of Aaron, to swallow all others—for in their passion for war, all their energies appear to have been concentrated.\*

3. The prevailing bias of their minds was distinguishable even in their persons. Though not so tall as the generality of Europeans, their frames were robust and muscular; their limbs flexible and active, and there was a penetrating quickness and wildness in their eyes that seemed an emanation from a fierce and martial spirit. To increase the terror caused by their appearance, they resorted to the assistance of art. They painted their faces and bodies with arnotto, so that their natural colour, which was that of a Spanish olive, was not easily distinguished. They disfigured their cheeks with deep incisions and hideous scars, which they stained with black, and they painted white and black circles round their eyes. The custom of boring the ears was common among them, but some also made holes in the cartilage which separated the nostrils, and others in the lips, in which they inserted the bone of a fish, a parrot's feather, or a fragment of tortoise-shell; and they wore bracelets and anklets of shells, though some made these ornaments of the teeth of their enemies, and hung about their neck whistles, formed of human bones, and collars of the teeth of the Agouti; upon gala occasions, they wore coronets and girdles of feathers. The decorations of the women differed little from those of the men, except that the former never wore

\* Rochefort, lib. 2. ch. xi.

the crown of feathers. The coat of arnotto mixed with oil, was used by both sexes, and was therefore probably a defence against the heat of the sun, and the noxious insects of the climate.\*

4. To use the bow and the war-club with force and dexterity, to swim with fearless agility, to catch fish, and build a cottage, were the necessary and ordinary acquirements of the race, of which the women partook in no inconsiderable degree. One method of giving skill to the boys in the exercise of the bow, was to suspend their food from a branch of a tree, and to compel them to pierce it with their arrows, before they were permitted to satisfy their hunger. But to make them approved warriors, they were also taught courage in action, and patience in suffering, contempt of danger and of death, and above all things implacable hatred of the Arrowauks. To this end, as soon as a male child was born, he was sprinkled with blood drawn from the shoulders of his father, which were lacerated for this purpose with the tooth of the Agouti; the parent cheerfully submitting to the operation, in confidence that the fortitude he displayed would be transmitted to his son. As the boy grew, he was familiarized with scenes of barbarity; he partook of the horrid repasts of his nation, and was frequently anointed with the fat of a slaughtered Arrowauk. But he was not allowed to participate in the toils of the warrior, and to share the glories of conquest, until his courage and fortitude had been proved by severe tests. At the dawn of manhood, he publicly, and with great ceremony, changed the name he received in infancy, for one of greater significance.†

Upon these occasions, the relatives and friends of the candidate for the honours of manhood, were

\* Rochefort. lib. 2. ch. ix.

† Rochefort. lib. 2. ch. xxv.

assembled in the hut of the father, or in the council-house of his tribe. There, seated in the midst, upon a low stool, he listened to a charge upon the duties he was about to assume, and solemnly engaged never to derogate from the glory of his ancestors, nor to cease to prosecute the vengeance of his nation against her enemies. After which, the father, with a certain bird of prey, which had been long prepared for the purpose, beat the son over the head and body until the bird was killed and crushed to pieces. The body of the youth was then scarified in many places with a tooth of the Agouti, and the wounds were rubbed with a decoction of pimento, in which the dead bird had been steeped. He was required to bear the excessive agony which this produced without exhibiting a sense of pain, under penalty of eternal disgrace. He was then made to eat of the heart of the bird, after which he was placed in a hammock, to undergo a fast which brought him almost to the grave. If he bore these trials with unyielding firmness, and they were always so borne, he was endowed with the privileges of a warrior, and pronounced by his countrymen to be a man like themselves.\*

5. Every distinction among this rude people was attained by a series of intense suffering. The child destined for a *Boyez*, that is, a magician or physician, was initiated into the mysteries of his profession, from infancy, by abstinence from several kinds of meats, by rigorous fasts, and severe lacerations of the body, after the manner of those who became warriors.† And he who would lead in war, endured torments still more excruciating. The aspirant to this high honour, declared his design by

\* Rochefort, lib. 11. ch. 19. Purchas, vol. 4. p. 1262. Gumilla, tom. 2. p. 286. Lafitau, tom. 1. p. 297. Edward's W. I. vol. 1. book 1. ch. 2.

† Rochefort, lib. 11. ch. 23.

binding his shield upon his head, and entering his cabin, with downcast eyes, and in profound silence. He placed himself in one corner, and a partition was constructed around him, leaving a space so small as scarce to allow him room to move, and his hammock was suspended close to the roof, that he might not speak to any one. From this prison he never departed, except for necessary occasions, and to undergo the rude trials imposed by those who had already passed the same ordeal.

He now commences a rigorous fast, which he must endure for six weeks. Life is barely sustained by a small quantity of boiled corn and cassava bread. Of the latter, he eats only the middle; the corners are reserved, under the supposition that they possess great virtues, for the feast which concludes the initiation. During this period, the candidate is visited morning and evening by the neighbouring chiefs, who represent to him, with their natural eloquence, that if he would attain the dignity to which he aspires, he must be courageous, and bear himself gallantly in all encounters with his enemies, and must shrink from no danger which may be incurred in supporting the honour of his nation, or in avenging the injuries which may be offered to it.

When the harangue is finished, he is made to feel in advance the sufferings which may be inflicted on him, should he be taken captive in war—to avoid a repetition of which, it may be well supposed, he would seek death in the field of battle. Having placed himself upright in the centre of the council-house, he receives from each captain three blows of a scourge made of the twisted roots of the palm, in the fabrication of which the young men are employed during the time of the ceremony. Many of these whips are requisite, each operator having one, with which three blows only, one across the chest,

the second upon the abdomen, and the third over the thighs, are given. But this discipline is administered twice, daily, during the probation ; and almost every blow, given by nervous and willing arms, with these pliant scourges, draws blood from the sufferer ; who, with invincible fortitude, suppresses every sign of pain. After each flagellation, he retires to his cabin, buries himself in his hammock, and is solaced by viewing the instruments of his torture piled above his head, as trophies of his constancy.

The six weeks of this first trial having passed, another is prepared for him yet more severe. An entertainment is made, for which an abundance of intoxicating drink is provided, and all the chieftains of the country attend, painted and decorated in their richest manner, and surrounded by respective trains of friends and relatives. As they approach the cabin, they send forth from the groves and thickets horrible cries and shouts, and then rush upon the dwelling, with bended bows and arrows on the string, giving a lively representation of a warlike assault. They seize the candidate, exhausted by his long fast and intense suffering, and bear him into the open air in his bed, which they suspend from some neighbouring trees. He is then placed upon the ground, and after being encouraged, by another discourse on the importance of the station he covets, he receives from each chief a violent blow with the scourge. After which, having resumed his hammock, a fire of venomous and stinking herbs is kindled beneath him, to the heat and smoke of which he is exposed, until his senses are overpowered, and his intolerable sufferings are momentarily relieved by a swoon. But the refuge of insensibility is not long allowed him. Stimulants are applied to reanimate him, he is ex-

horted to perseverance, and the fire is renewed and kept up for a considerable length of time.

Whilst the miserable wretch undergoes these torments, his persecutors indulge in the wildest debauch of eating and drinking. At length, perceiving their patient about to fall into a second syncope, in order to restore him, they put on him a collar and girdle of palm leaves, filled with large black ants, whose slightest prick gives hours of anguish. Roused by this new agony, he springs from his bed, and is almost suffocated by an effusion of *palinot*, a beverage of the country, which is poured upon his head through sieves employed for this purpose. His trial is now over. He is conducted to the nearest fountain or stream, and, after thorough ablution, is restored to the secluded apartment of his cabin. His fast is continued for some time longer, but is moderated. He is supplied from time to time with small birds, killed by some one of his fellow-captains; and his present abstinence seems rather designed to provide against the dangers of repletion, than to continue his noviciate. At length he is proclaimed captain, is furnished with new weapons, and every thing necessary to his condition, and the accession to this high honour is celebrated by an appropriate festival.\*

6. The severity of these ceremonies was surpassed among the Caribs of Guiana, whose government was monarchical, on the choice of a king, who governed them with absolute authority. Ordinarily, the most ancient of the nation is selected for this high office, if he possess the qualities necessary to sustain its dignity; that is, if he have valour, strength, and address; if he be sober, patient, fruitful in resources and stratagems, and acquaint-

\* The foregoing account of the initiation of a captain, is taken from Lafitau, vol. 1. p. 297, who has adopted it from the voyage of Le Sieur Biet to Cayenne, in 1652. Liv. 3. ch. 10. p. 376.



ed with the country, and the roads which lead to the surrounding nations. His sufficiency in these virtues is submitted to a rude probation, which is commenced by a fast that is to continue for nine months, during which he is allowed to eat a handful of grain only each day. He is made to bear enormous burdens; to keep a strict and nightly watch at the door of the council-house; to traverse the country in all directions, until its boundaries, its springs and streams, and all its productions, are familiar to him. To accustom him to pain, he is sometimes buried for hours to the waist in an ant-hill, filled with those large ants of which we have already spoken; and at other times, he is clothed with coronet, collar, girdle, bracelets, garters, and anklets, of leaves, in which hundreds of these insects are so placed, as to permit them to exercise their fiercest power on the sufferer.

When he is deemed to have been sufficiently tried, the whole nation proceeds to seek him, in some retreat to which he has withdrawn, in order that he may modestly seem to shun the distinction which he so dearly purchases; or, as some of the kings explain it, that he may remember that he is raised from the dust to the throne. The latter reason is confirmed by an additional ceremony, in which each of the assistants marches with measured step towards him, and places his foot upon the head of the candidate, after which they raise him up, and prostrate themselves before him, casting their bows and arrows at his feet. This humility, which so ordinarily precedes the elevation of the ambitious, is compensated by the assumption of the true regal character, and the absolute monarch in turn treads upon the necks of his subjects, that his power over them may be evident. After these forms have been duly complied with, he is led in triumph to the council-house, where a feast

has been prepared by the women. But before he indulges in the pleasures of the table, he must exhibit one further proof of his address, by discharging an arrow into a cup the size of an egg, attached to the top of the roof. This being done, each woman serves him in turn with a bowl of *Ouicou*, an intoxicating liquor, which he must swallow, in order to show that he can drink for thirty men, as he was enabled to content himself for thirty days with the quantity of food which one man might readily consume in a single one. As in this debauch he is compelled to vomit frequently, the repast has more the air of a rude torture, than of a festival. The courtiers here, as in more magnificent courts, closely imitate their master, and do not cease to gorge themselves until the stock of provisions is exhausted.\*

7. Having described the ceremonies which attend the exaltation of a chief to the highest civil rank, the reader will perhaps be gratified with an account of those which perfected the more mystical character of the Boyez, or priest. When the young proselyte has sustained years of trial, under the direction of some ancient Boyez, whose authority is so absolute and exclusive, that without his permission no intercourse may exist between the pupil and his nearest relatives,—he is called before his teacher, on the eve of the night which is to crown his invincible patience, and terminate his long noviciate. The future is described to him in the most attractive colours—the dignity of his destined rank—the power consequent on having a familiar spirit at his command, are dwelt on to excite him to sustain the frightful wonders of the night without shrinking.

\* Lafitau, vol. 1. p. 304. Lettre du P. de la Neuville, *Memoirs de Trevoux* Mars.1723.

In the mean time, the women are engaged in preparing a cabin, in which they suspend three hammocks, one for the *Maboya*, or spirit, one for the priest, and the third for the Neophite. An altar, composed of baskets, or tables of ozier piled together, is erected at the end of the cabin, on which are placed some cakes of Cassava, and a vessel of *Ouicou* for the spirit, to whom the sacrifice is to be offered.

Towards the middle of the night, the priest and his disciple enter the cabin alone. The former, after having smoked a leaf of tobacco rolled, shouts in a tone which rises almost to a yell, the words of a magical song, which are instantly followed, if credit be given to the narrators, by a horrible but distant noise in the air. As soon as this is heard by the conjuror, he extinguishes the fire entirely, the spirits delighting in impenetrable darkness. This being done, the *Maboya* enters the cabin through the roof with the celerity of lightning, and the noise of thunder. The trembling occupants instantly fall prostrate, and offer him their adoration. He commences a conversation, of which the inhabitants of the neighbouring cabins are careful not to lose a word, by inquiring in a counterfeit voice the cause of his evocation, and declares his readiness to gratify all their desires. The conjuror returns thanks, and in a few words, prays him first to partake of the collation prepared for him. Whereupon the demon enters his hammock with an agitation which shakes the whole hut, and disposes himself to eat. A violent clatter of teeth and jaws follows, as if he actually devoured all that was presented to him, though in truth nothing is consumed. The people, however, are persuaded that the demon takes what is suitable for him, and they hold the residue to be sanctified, and fitted for the use of the ancient priests, when they have rendered

themselves worthy of partaking of it by the highest purification.

The noise of mastication having ceased, the conjuror descends from his hammock, and kneeling in a suppliant posture, thus addresses the demon : " I have called upon thee not only to offer the duty which I owe, but to place under thy protection the young man now present. Cause then to descend immediately another spirit like unto thyself, that this youth may serve him, and be devoted to him, on the same conditions and for the same purposes for which I have served thee for many years."

To this request the spirit assents with the semblance of much joy, assuring the suppliant that his prayer shall be instantly granted. And in fact a second spirit gives immediate signs of his presence, by a noise not less frightful than that which announced his precursor. The priest and Genii then unite in magical incantations and contortions, until they are nearly exhausted, and until the affrighted candidate throws himself from his hammock to the earth ; and also in a suppliant posture cries out, " O spirit who deignest to extend to me thy protection, be favourable, I pray thee, to the designs of one who is lost without thine aid, and do not suffer me miserably to perish. But be thou propitious to my demands, when I shall call on thee, and grant whatever shall be necessary for the happiness of my nation."

" Take courage," replies the invoked spirit. " Be thou faithful, and I will never abandon thee. At sea or on land, I will be ever at thy side in the hour of peril. But know also, that if thou servest me not faithfully and satisfactorily, that thou shalt have no enemy more cruel than I." With these words both spirits vanish, amid violent noise, in imitation of thunder, which completes the terror of their worshippers.

Immediately the crowd from the neighbouring cabins rush with lights upon the magical scene, and replace in their beds the miserable devotees, whom they find prostrate on the earth, and almost without life. Their parents and friends gather around them, and warm them by a great fire, which they kindle, and supply them with food to restore their strength, exhausted by long fasts. But it is with great difficulty that they succeed in removing from the imagination of the initiated the horrors with which the older priests have stored it. These at length become familiar, and with the progress of years, he passes from the dupe to the knave, calls upon the spirits to assist at the initiation of new neophytes, and most probably assumes the character, and plays the part of the demon himself in these lugubrious ceremonies.\*

8. But in the season of war only did the island Carib bow to the supremacy of another. Having no law, he required no magistrate. To the father of a family belonged that authority which is inseparable from his condition, and which terminates with the dependence of his offspring. A tribute of respect too was paid to age and experience, but this was voluntary.†

9. The institution of marriage was recognized, so far as the appropriation of one or more females to one male may be called such. Polygamy was allowed with some show of excuse, as the women, from motives of superstition, carefully avoided the nuptial intercourse during pregnancy. When marriageable, the male was expected to wed his cousins-germain: he had the right to claim them for wives, but was not compelled to accept them.‡ The form of marriage was simple, consisting merely in the expression of assent by the parties and their

\* Lafitau. vol. 1. 344.

† Rochefort, ch. 23. 19. lib. 2.

‡ Ib. ch. 22. Du Tertre, tom. 2. p. 374.



relatives, but the contract was most frequently made by the latter. Female captives, as we have already observed, were sometimes espoused by their captors, and the children of this intercourse were deemed free, but the mothers were considered as slaves. Adultery is said to have been unknown among them before the European discovery—after that period it sometimes occurred, and was usually avenged by the husband, according to his own sense of injury. If he inflicted death upon the wife, he reported her punishment to her parents; who not only approved the execution, but frequently offered him another daughter to wife. As among all uncivilized nations, the women were domestic drudges, and performed the chief labours in house and field. If a Carib had more than one wife, he built a hut for each, and divided his time among them, according to his pleasure, always assured of cheerful and devoted attention. The favourite accompanied him in his war expeditions, acting the part of servant and squire. Under these circumstances, as might be expected, the women were not prolific.

10. Besides the ornaments usually worn by both sexes, the women, on arriving at the age of puberty, wore a buskin of cotton. But this distinction was not permitted to captives. In other respects, both male and female were entirely naked. Their hair, uniformly of a shining black, long, straight, and coarse, was dressed with daily care, and adorned with much art; the men particularly decorating it with feathers of various colours. It was a proof of deep sorrow, when, on the death of a relative or friend, they cut it short, like that of their slaves, to whom the luxury of long hair was rigorously denied. Like most nations of the new hemisphere, they eradicated with great nicety the incipient beard, and all superfluous hairs upon their bodies; a circumstance which gave rise to the false opinion



that the aborigines of America were naturally beardless. The most remarkable circumstance concerning the persons of the Caribs, was the alteration of the natural form of the head. On the birth of a child, the skull was confined between two small pieces of wood, placed before and behind, and firmly bound together, which elevated the forehead, and gave to it and the back part of the head the resemblance of two sides of a square.

11. They resided in villages, consisting of cabins built with poles fixed circularly in the ground, and drawn to a point at the top, and covered with the leaves of the palm-tree. In the centre of each village was erected a building of superior magnitude, for a council-house, where the men, excluding the women, assembled to take their meals, and where the youth were inspired with martial ardour, and instructed in the art of war by the harangues of the elders.

12. The arts and manufactures of such a people were necessarily few, but they seem to have been highly perfected in their kind. Like the other islanders visited by Columbus, the Caribs made an abundance of cotton cloth, which they dyed of various colours, but chiefly red, and used for making their *hammocks*, or swinging beds, such as are now used at sea, and for partitioning their huts into compartments. They formed vessels of clay for various purposes, which they baked in kilns, surpassing in thinness, smoothness, and beauty, the like fabrics of the negroes of Africa, and equalling the earthenware made by more civilized nations. Of the nature and extent of their agriculture, our knowledge is slender and unsatisfactory. They are supposed to have cultivated their lands in common, and to have distributed the harvest, from public stores, to each family in proportion to its wants.

13. Their food consisted of bread of the cassava

and maize, sweet potatoes, the various other fruits and vegetables of their climate; lizards, particularly the Iguana, fish, and crabs, and, we are compelled to add, human flesh, when they could obtain it. They had also beverages made of the fermented infusions of potatoes, cassava roots, and fruits. But they rejected with abhorrence some of the richest bounties of nature; refusing to eat of the Pecary or Mexican hog, the Manati or sea-cow, the turtle, and also the eel, with which the rivers of some of the islands abounded. This abstinence has been supposed to arise from religious motives, like that of the Jews, as was also a singular custom observed by the Caribs in common with the Tybarenians of Asia, and the inhabitants of Japan. On the birth of his first son, the father retired to bed, and fasted for ten or twelve days, with a strictness which often endangered his life. And a similar but shorter fast was practised, at the birth of his other children. If this custom were founded in pious sorrow for the introduction of a sentient being into a world of suffering, the mourning was not of long continuance, and was immediately succeeded by festivity and rejoicings, and by drunkenness and debauchery.\*

14. Unlike the Thracians and the inhabitants of the Canary Islands, who buried the dead with gladness and rejoicing, the Caribs mourned with great apparent sincerity the deprivation they sustained. The grave, circular in form, was commonly made in the dwelling of the deceased, and the body, covered with a hammock, was placed on a stool therein, in a sitting posture, with the knees drawn up to the chin. The ground was kept open ten or twelve days, during which the body was visited by the relatives, who brought with them meat and drink to

\* Rochefort, *Lafitau*, tom. 1. p. 257. Churchill's *Voy.* 2 vol. p. 133.

present to it. At the expiration of this period of mourning, the grave was covered with planks and earth, the nearest relatives cut off their hair and fasted rigorously, the hut was abandoned, and another erected for the family in a distant situation. When the body had decayed, the family again assembled round it, and having compactly trodden the earth about and upon it, terminated their mourning with feasting and merriment.

15. Of religion, the Caribs had such obscure and false ideas as are usual among savage nations. The human mind, in its greatest weakness or its greatest strength, attains the conviction of the existence of a supernatural power—of a power which directs and governs all creation, as the will guides and controls the faculties of our frame. Of the attributes of this power the highest perfection of our reason imparts a very limited knowledge; they can be fully known from divine revelation only. In those workings of nature which are visibly beneficent, untutored man discovers the influence of a good and merciful spirit, whilst in the ravages of the storm and the blight, he beholds the power of a malignant one. Hence, every people are in some degree Manicheans, having faith in good and evil deities, whom they endeavour to propitiate; and in proportion to their mental cultivation, their adoration is offered to the one or to the other. The Caribs had even some obscure and undefined notions of a supreme intelligence which created and governs all things—but, unable to elevate their minds to the proper contemplation of the true God, they cultivated the favour of certain inferior divinities, one of whom they supposed to be attached to each individual person. They had also some rude notions of practical worship, and offered sacrifices of their favourite viands, upon altars erected in their cottages, to household gods, which were

rude effigies of the invisible powers. These offerings were more frequently made to avert the anger of the evil, than in gratitude for the beneficence of the good spirit. And as, wherever there is religious worship, however simple or imperfect, there are priests or intermediate agents between the worshipper and his God, who know, or claim to know his will, and to aid in the administration of his power—so the Carib had his *Boyez*, who was his priest, his enchanter, and his physician, to whom he liberally imparted a share of all his acquisitions, that he might prevail with Maboya, (their common name for evil spirits,) to forbear to do him an injury, or to open to his view the volume of futurity. These applications were also frequently accompanied by severe penances inflicted by the applicant upon himself, such as long fasts, and lacerations of the body with the tooth of the Agouti.

The benevolent deities were called *Akamboué*, which seems to have been the term for abstract spirit, and was also applied to the souls of men. But most commonly, the men addressed these Gods by the name of *Icheiro*, and the women by that of *Chemin*. And when each spoke particularly of his own guardian spirit, the men called him *Icheirikow*, and the women *Chimiignum*.

Faith in a divine providence is almost inseparable from a belief in a future state. The Caribs believed, not only that death was not the extinction of their being, but they pleased themselves with the conceit, that their departed relatives were spectators of their conduct, and sympathized with their sufferings and their joys. They assigned to the brave and the virtuous, in a future life, an increase and sublimation of the pleasures they enjoyed before death. Military honour and renown, and the attendance of their wives and captives, entered into their highest ideas of happiness in their new state ;

and that these enjoyments might be complete, they sometimes sacrificed, at their funerals, a portion of the captives which the deceased had taken in war. To the cowardly and degenerate, they allotted a far different fate. These were doomed to everlasting banishment beyond the mountains;—to unremitting labour in disgraceful employments, and to a humiliation still more deep—captivity and servitude among the Arrowauks.\*

16. The language of the Caribs is said to have been smooth and labial, and was subject to an extraordinary variation when spoken by the respective sexes, many words being peculiar to each. This peculiarity is supposed to have been occasioned by the adherence of the women, who were preserved from slaughter when the Caribs first conquered these islands, to their original language, and to their having perseveringly taught it to their female descendants. And this supposition is sustained by the fact, that no such variation was discoverable among the Caribs of the continent. The elders of the nation, too, had a dialect which was exclusively used in their discussions in council, and which was never communicated to the women, nor to the young men, until they mingled in public affairs. Their intellectual cultivation was very inconsiderable. They had no terms for abstract ideas, such as *understanding*, memory, will, &c.; and their progress in arithmetic scarce enabled them to number beyond twenty; to designate that number they referred to their fingers and toes, and when they would express a quantity beyond it, they adverted to the hair of their heads, or the sand on the sea-shore.†

XIII. 1. The Arrowauks, who inhabited the large

\* Rochefort. Du Tertre. Purchas, vol. 4. p. 1274.

† Lafitau.

islands of Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica, Porto Rico, and Trinidad, and others not possessed by the Caribs, were descended from the Arrowauks of Guiana, a race of Indians to whose noble qualities the most honourable testimony is borne by every traveller who has visited them.\* The whole number of these islanders, when first discovered by Columbus, was estimated by Las Casas at six millions. But the natives of Hispaniola were reckoned by Oviedo at one million only, and by Martyr, who wrote on the authority of Columbus, at one million two hundred thousand, which is probably the most correct. Estimating the population of the other islands to bear the same proportion to their extent, the number will fall greatly short of the first computation.†

2. In stature they were taller, but less robust than the Caribs. Their colour was a clear brown, not deeper in general than that of a Spanish peasant, much exposed to the wind and sun. Like the Caribs, they altered the natural form of the head in infancy, but in a different manner: the forehead, from the eyebrows to the coronal suture, was depressed, by which an unnatural thickness and elevation was given to the hinder part of the skull. By this practice, Herrera assures us, the crown was so strengthened, that a Spanish broad-sword, instead of cleaving the skull at a stroke, would frequently break short upon it! Their hair was uniformly black and straight;—their features hard and unsightly;—the face broad, the nose flat; but their eyes beamed with good-nature, and there was something pleasing and inviting in their countenances, which proclaimed a frank and gentle disposition. “It was an honest face,” (says Martyr), “coarse, but not gloomy; for it was enlivened by confidence, and softened by compassion.” Both men and wo-

\* 1 Edw. W. I. 60. Humboldt's Personal Narrative.

† 1 Edw. W. I.



men wore nothing more than a slight covering of cotton cloth around the waist; but in the women it extended to the knees: the children of both sexes appeared entirely naked.

European writers, French and English, have followed each other\* in charging on this and other American races, feebleness in person and constitution—in representing them as incapable of labour, incurably indolent, and insensible to the attractions of beauty, and the influence of love. If the Arrowsuk were not capable of sustaining the labour of a European, the habits of his life, not formed by daily drudgery, were an adequate and satisfactory cause. If he were indolent, the bounty of beneficent Nature, which poured around him in profusion all the necessaries of life, and which gave him a clime where inaction is happiness, is his apology. But if he were insensible to the influence of love, Nature must have wrought in his case differently from all others in the world; and a tropical sun, with food and rest, must have checked the current of his blood more effectually than the frost, the famine, and the darkness of the poles. But it was not so. This coldness formed no part of the disposition of our islanders, amongst whom an attachment to the sex was remarkably conspicuous.—“Love with them was not a transient and youthful ardour only; but the source of all their pleasures, and the chief business of life; for not being, like the Caribs, oppressed by perpetual solicitude, and tormented by an unquenchable thirst of revenge, they gave full indulgence to the instincts of nature, whilst the influence of the climate heightened the sensibility of the passions.”†

3. Their limbs were pliant and active, and their motions displayed gracefulness and ease. Their

\* Buffon. De Pauw. Robertson.

† 1 Edw. W. I. ch. 3. P. Martyr, Dec. 3. & 8. Herrera, lib. 3.

agility was eminently conspicuous in their dances; wherein they delighted and excelled, devoting the cool hours of the night to this employment. It was their custom to dance from evening to the dawn; and although fifty thousand men and women were frequently assembled together on these occasions, they seemed actuated by one common impulse, keeping time by responsive motions of their hands and feet, and bodies, with an exactness that was wonderful. These public dances, for they had others highly licentious, were appropriated to particular solemnities, and being accompanied with historical songs, were called *Areytos*; a feature in their political institutions of which we shall presently speak.\*

Besides the exercise of dancing, another diversion prevailed among them, called *Bato*, which had a distant resemblance to the game of cricket. The players were divided into two parties, which alternately changed places; and the sport consisted in dexterously throwing and returning an elastic ball, made of the gum of a tree, from one party to the other. It was not, however, caught in the hand, or returned with an instrument; but received on the head, the elbow, or the foot, and the dexterity and force with which it was thence repelled, were astonishing and inimitable.

4. The same writers, who would teach us to believe that this race was inferior to any of the old world in physical power, have also denied them intellectual ability. But how shall this inferiority be determined? Not by a comparison with the highly improved and cultivated European, or Asiatic, nor with the African of the Nile, or Mediterranean. But the Arrowauk may be fearlessly compared with the northern savages of Europe, with the wander-

\* 1 Edw. W. I. ch. 3. P. Martyr, Dec. 3. c. 8. Herrera, lib. 3.

ing and houseless hordes of Asia, and the thousand tribes of southern and central Africa. And he will be found to possess in an eminent degree the powers which dignify humanity. Nay, let us ask, how much lower in the scale should he be placed, than the Gaul and the Briton, the dweller in huts, clad in garments of undressed skins, without agriculture, or a permanent home—who scarce emerged from the darkness of his sombre forests, save to fly from a powerful enemy, or to plunder and destroy a feeble neighbour. The capacity of the West Indian seems in all respects to have been equal to that of other men similarly situated. With few artificial wants to stimulate his invention; with his natural ones abundantly and almost spontaneously supplied, he had no inducement to mental or bodily toil; and had such inducement existed, deprived of the useful metals, and the aid of domesticated animals, his progress in improvement must have been tardy. If, therefore, they rose in some respects to a degree of refinement not often observed in savage life, we may justly presume that in a state of society, productive of new desires and artificial necessities, and with proper appliances, they would have attained a distinguished grade of improvement. But what they wanted in excited energy of mind, was abundantly supplied by the softer affections; by sweetness of temper, and native goodness of disposition. “All writers, who have treated of their character, agree that they were unquestionably the most gentle and benevolent of the human race. Though not blessed with the light of revelation, they practised one of the noblest precepts of Christianity, forgiveness of their enemies; laying all that they possessed at the feet of their oppressors, courting their notice, and preventing their wishes, with such fondness and assiduity, as

should have disarmed habitual cruelty, and melted bigotry into tenderness.\*”

5. The government of these tribes differed greatly from that known to the Caribs. Whilst the latter refused to recognize any authority, except in time of war, the former were subject to hereditary chiefs whose power was absolute, and who were regarded with the most profound reverence and submission. Opposition to the supreme authority was deemed impious. And if the prince commanded the subject to cast himself from a high rock, or to drown himself in the sea, the sovereign will was obeyed without a murmur. The island of Haiti was divided into five kingdoms, as we have stated elsewhere. Each kingdom was subdivided among inferior chiefs, who held their possessions by a species of feudal tenure, the service of which consisted in attendance upon the sovereign, in peace or in war, whenever commanded so to do.†

We have to regret that the Spanish historians have left us in ignorance concerning this order of nobles, and the nature and extent of their subordinate jurisdiction.

“The islands of Cuba and Jamaica were divided, like Hispaniola, into many principalities or kingdoms; but Porto Rico was subject to one Cacique only. We have observed that the dignity of a chieftain was hereditary, but the law of succession was peculiar to the country. Martyr observes,‡“that the Caciques bequeathed the supreme authority to the children of their sisters, according to seniority, disinheriting their own offspring, being certain that by this policy they preferred the blood-royal; which might not happen to be the case in advancing any of the children of their numerous wives.”

\* Martyr. Herrera. F. Columbus. c. 27. 32. 1 Edw. W. I. c. 3.

† Oviedo, lib. 3. c. iv.

‡ Dec. 1. lib. 2

The relation of Oviedo is somewhat different and more probable; he remarks that one of the wives of each Cacique was distinguished above the rest, and was considered by the people as the reigning queen; the children of whom, according to priority of birth, succeeded to the father's honours. In default of issue by the favourite princess, the sisters of the Cacique, if there were no surviving brothers, took place of his children by other wives.\* Thus Anacoana, on the death of Behechio, her brother, became queen of Xaragua. This regulation was obviously intended to prevent the mischiefs of a disputed succession, among children whose pretensions were equal.

6. When a Cacique died, his body was embowelled, and dried in an oven moderately heated, so that the bones and even the skin were preserved entire, and afterwards placed in a cave with those of his ancestors, where also were deposited a due proportion of bread, wine, and the arms of the deceased.\* If he was slain in battle and the body not recovered, his subjects composed songs in his praise, which they taught their children—"A better and nobler testimony," says Edwards,† "than heaps of dry bones or monuments of marble; since memorials to the deceased are, or ought to be, intended less in honour of the dead than as incitements to the living." The people preserved only the heads of their deceased relatives; and when a person was at the point of death, in mistaken humanity, they strangled him. This fate also attended the Caciques. Sometimes they were carried from the house; at others, bread and water was placed at their bed-head, and they were left to perish alone. On other occasions, they bore the patient,

\* Oviedo, lib. v. c. 111.

† 1 Hist. W. I. ch. 3.

when very ill, to the nearest prince, who decided whether he should be suffocated. ✓

It is related by Martyr and Herrera,\* that, on the death of a Cacique, the most beloved of his wives was immolated at his funeral. Thus Anacaona, on the death of her brother, Behechio, ordered a beautiful woman, named *Guanahata Benechina*, to be buried alive in the cave where his body was deposited. But Oviedo,† by no means partial to the Indian character, denies that this custom was general. Anacaona, who had been married to a Carib, may have adopted this part of his national customs. And Edwards somewhat maliciously remarks, “it is not impossible, under a female administration, *among savages*, but that the extraordinary beauty of the unfortunate victim contributed to her destruction.‡”

7. The songs in praise of deceased chieftains, constituted a branch of those solemnities which were called *Areytos*, consisting of hymns and public dances, accompanied with musical instruments made of shells, and a sort of drum, the sound of which was heard at a great distance. These hymns, reciting the great actions of the departed Cacique, his fame in war, and his gentleness in peace, formed a national history, at once a tribute of gratitude to the deceased, and a lesson to the living. Nor could any thing have been more instructive to the rising generation than this institution, since it comprehended also the antiquities of their country, and the traditions of their ancestors. The triumph for victory in war, the lamentation for public calamity, the national festivities, and the expression of the passion of love, were all subjects of these exhibitions; the dance being grave or gay, as the subject

\* Dec. 3. lib. 9. Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 3. ch. 3.

† Lib. v. ch. 3.

‡ 1 Edw. West Ind. ch. 3.



required. It is pretended, that among the traditions thus publicly recited, there was one of a prophetic nature, denouncing ruin and desolation by the arrival of strangers completely clad, and armed with the lightning of heaven. The ceremonies which were observed when this awful prediction was repeated, we may well believe, were strongly expressive of grief and horror.\*

8. In religious science, the Arrowauks were further advanced than the Caribs. Their conception of the creator, whom they called *Jocahuna*, was more definite and comprehensive. They deemed him supreme, invisible, immortal, and omnipotent. But they assigned to him a father and mother, whom they distinguished by a variety of names, and to whom they allotted the sun and the moon as their chief seats of habitation. They believed, also, that man was an accountable being, and that the deeds done in the body were to be rewarded in a future state, according to their kind. The remarkable speech of the venerable ancient of Cuba, which we have already recorded, is almost Christian.† But their notions of future happiness were Mahometan. They supposed, that spirits of good men were conveyed to a pleasant valley, called *Coyaba*, a place of indolent tranquillity, abounding with cool shades and murmuring rivulets, with delicious fruits and lovely women; in a country where drought never rages, and the hurricane is never felt. In this seat of bliss, they held that their greatest enjoyments would arise from the company of their departed ancestors, and of those persons who were dear to them in life.‡

By a common inconsistency of the human mind on religious subjects, they considered the Creator

\* Martyr, Dec. 3. lib. 9.

† See vol. i. p. 168.

‡ Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 3. ch. 3. Martyr, Dec. 1. lib. ix. F. Columbus. Benzon.

as regardless of his work ; as having transferred the government of the world to subordinate beings, whom they believed to be malignant, delighting to convert into evil that which he pronounced to be good. The effusion of gratitude, the warmth of affection, the confidence of hope, entered not into their devotions. Their idols of wood or stone, or of painting, were universally hideous and frightful, sometimes representing toads, and other odious reptiles, but more frequently the human face horribly distorted. To these they gave the name of *Zemi*. They were attended by *Bohios*, or priests, and a large house in each village was erected for their worship. This sanctuary was jealously guarded by the priests, who were the messengers and interpreters of the divine will ; and the mediators, by whose prayers all dangers might be averted. The worship consisted in certain ceremonies and discourses of the *Bohio*, and in a singular offering, which was partaken by the worshipper. In the temple was placed a small round table, ingeniously wrought, on which was kept a powder, which he placed on the head of the idol, from which, by means of a forked tube, he drew it into his own nostrils, and immediately left the place raging like one possessed.\* To the profitable cure of souls, the priests added the no less profitable cure of bodies, and they likewise claimed the privilege of educating the children of the first rank of people—thus combining an influence which, extending to the highest concerns of this life and the next, was irresistible.†

With such power in the priesthood, it may well be supposed that the alliance between church and state was not less intimate in these islands than in the kingdoms of Europe. Here, as there, religion

\* Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 3. c. 3.

† Martyr.

was made the instrument of civil despotism, and the will of the Cacique, if confirmed by the priest, was impiously pronounced the decree of heaven. Columbus relates, that some of his people entering unexpectedly into one of their houses of worship, found the Cacique employed in obtaining responses from the Zemi. By the sound of the voice which came from the idol, they knew that it was hollow : and, dashing it to the ground to expose the imposture, they discovered a tube, which was before covered with leaves, that communicated from the back part of the image to an inner apartment, whence the priest issued his precepts as through a speaking-trumpet ; but the Cacique earnestly entreated them to say nothing of what they had seen, declaring that, by means of such pious frauds, he collected tributes, and kept his kingdom in subjection.\*

The grossness of the religious faith of this race will be more fully conceived, when it is understood that they held their idols, the work of their own hands, to be, not only the effigies of the divinity, but to be in themselves immortal, and that they would appear to them after death. Their superstitions in other respects were not less gross. A tradition prevailed among them that, at some remote period of their history, all their women had deserted their island ; and that whilst ardently longing to supply their place, the men went forth to bathe, during which a tremendous rain came on, and they beheld falling among the trees certain forms like to the human, but which were neither men nor women. The bathers sought to take them, but they fled as if they had been winged, but finally four were captured. A solemn council was holden, to determine how these forms might be converted into

\* Edw. W. I. ch. 3. F. Columbus. Herrera, Dec. 1. ch. 3.

women, and a metamorphosis was at last effected by means of the woodpecker.\*

They believed that the sun and moon sprang from a cave, which they called *Iorobaba*, and which they held in great reverence, and adorned with small idols of stone, to which they made large and frequent offerings, in the faith that these *Zemis* would send them rain at their prayer. They believed, also, that the dead reappeared on the earth during the darkness of the night, in their natural forms, for their diversion; and most living Indians were fearful of wandering alone after night-fall.†

The *Bohios*, or priests, whom we have already said were physicians and conjurors, claimed an intimate acquaintance with the dead, and a knowledge of their secrets. They performed cures, as the Spaniards inform us, by magical and diabolical arts. They carried with them many *Zemis* of stone and wood; some having power, as they averred, to cause rains, others to promote the harvest, and others again to influence the winds. The rules which governed the practice of the physician upon the princes and nobles, seem to have been framed with a view to the protection of the latter from indiscreet speculation and experiment, since the former was required to partake of the medicine which he administered to them. Upon these occasions, also, the physician inhaled through the nostrils a species of herb powdered, which produced a delirium, attended by many extravagant

\* On this occasion, we must adopt the modesty of Gibbon, and give our readers the particulars of this extraordinary conversion, in a foreign language. Herrera says—"Pero que al fin tomaron quatro, y que hizieron consejo entre ellos, como harian que fuesen mugeres, y que buscaron un pajaro, que agujera los arboles, que nosotros llamamos picaca, y que atendo á estas personas los pies y las manos, les pusieron el pajaro, y que pensando que era madera, commenco a picar en la parte donde tenian su naturaleza, y azi quedaron hechas mugeres."

† Herrera, ubi supra.

and foolish actions, during which he pretended to converse with his Zemís, and to receive from them the proper instructions for the cure of the patient.

9. In the arts necessary to the preservation and comfortable enjoyment of life, the Arrowauks had made considerable progress. Agriculture was systematically and extensively prosecuted, and the maize, Cassava, Yams, and other esculent roots, yielded them an abundant and wholesome supply of food. Dr. Robertson,\* with that want of discrimination which was inseparable from his attempt to reduce all the tribes of America under one general view, observes, that as the natives of the New World had no tame animals, nor the use of the metals, their agriculture must necessarily have been imperfect. To this remark Mr. Edwards properly replies, "that as every family raised corn for their own support, and the islands, (to use the expression of *Las Casas*) abounding with inhabitants as an ant-hill with ants, a very small portion of ground allotted to each, would comprehend in the aggregate an immense space of cultivated country. Unacquainted with the soil of the West Indies, Dr. Robertson should have delivered his sentiments on this subject with diffidence. That soil which is known in these islands by the name of brick-mould, is not only superior to most others in fertility, but requires very little trouble in cultivation. Among our islanders, to whom the use of iron was unknown, instruments were ingeniously formed of stone, and of a certain species of durable wood, which were endued with nearly equal solidity and sharpness. Possessing the tools and materials necessary for these purposes, they could not be destitute of proper implements for the ruder operations of husbandry, on a soil incapable of

\* Hist. Am. b. 4. sec. 62.

much resistance.”\* We may add, that the proposition of Guarionex, the Cacique of the Vega, to Columbus, to cultivate with grain a band of country of one hundred and fifty leagues in length, affords unequivocal evidence of astonishing agricultural capacity in his subjects.†

In the arts of navigation, their progress was not considerable, since they had not acquired the use of masts and sails, but employed oars or paddles only to propel their boats. Yet these vessels were constructed with skill, and frequently much ornamented by painting and sculpture, and sometimes were sufficiently capacious to carry one hundred and fifty persons. They were commonly made of cedar, or the great cotton-tree hollowed and squared at each end, like punts. Their gunnels were raised with canes, braced close, and smeared over with some bituminous substance, to render them watertight.‡ They were sometimes driven by forty oars, and had an awning constructed of mats and palm-leaves, sufficient to protect the voyagers from the sun, rain, and spray of the sea.§

In the manufacture of domestic utensils and furniture, our islanders displayed much elegance and variety, especially in their earthenware, curiously woven beds, and implements of husbandry. Among the presents made to Bartholomew Columbus by the princess Anacoana, were fourteen chairs of wood, like ebony, beautifully wrought, and no less than sixty vessels of different sorts, for the use of his kitchen and table, all of which were ornamented with figures of various kinds, fantastic forms, and accurate representations of living animals. Chairs have been found by the French colonists at Samana, formed of the yellow Acomas, one of the

\* 1 Edw. W. I. b. 1. ch. 3. (note.)

† P. Martyr. Dec. 1.

‡ See page 187. vol. 1.

§ Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. 5.



hardest woods of the island, so neatly made and highly polished, as to excite the wonder of the discoverer, that such works could be executed without tools of iron.\* And in the Museum of the American Philosophical Society, at Philadelphia, is a stool, or chair of wood, taken from a cave in St. Salvador, representing an animal with protruding head, short legs, and the posterior part of the body turned up, forming a back. But it is rudely carved, and the seat is not raised more than six inches from the ground. They fabricated ornaments of gold, for the head, neck, arms, and ankles, by which new value was given to the metal in the taste of the forms into which they cast it.† The industry and ingenuity, therefore, of this people must have greatly exceeded the measure of their wants. Having provided for the necessities of their condition, they proceeded to improve and adorn it.‡ But they were woefully deficient in the means of defending themselves and their possessions against the cruelty and cupidity of their Carib foes, and the greater inhumanity and avarice of their Christian friends. Their warlike instruments consisted of stakes, sharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire, except among the inhabitants on some portions of the sea-shore, who had borrowed from the Caribs the use of the bow. Although thus ignorant of warfare, and overflowing with benevolence, —though unused to privation, and habituated to self-indulgence, and to unrestricted sensual gratification, and to all those enjoyments which render men unfit to contend with their fellows endowed with sterner qualities, the Arrowauk was brave! We repeat that he was brave, notwithstanding the calumnies of his European oppressors. He resisted and repelled the Carib, and when he discovered

\* Mem. of M. Arthaud. *Cap Fran.* 1786.

† Martyr, Dec. 1.

‡ Edw. W. Ind.

that his Spanish guest, if a supernatural being, was a demon of evil, he heroically opposed him, undeterred by his superiority of arms, his fleet and fiery horses, and his savage blood-hounds. To regain his freedom, the poor but spirited Indian exposed his naked body to the keen sabre of an invulnerable foe, and to the bolt and the flash which he had but too just cause to dread, more than the thunder and lightning of the heavens. His failure against such odds should not derogate from his character. The Indian of the other hemisphere, with far greater power to resist, has been compelled to yield to the northern conquerors, and he has been preserved under their dominion, because his taskmasters are better calculators of the mercantile value of human life, and because he has, by the endurance of ages of tyranny, become insensible to its inflictions.

10. It may be safely affirmed, that history affords no instance of greater barbarity than that exercised on these innocent and inoffensive people. And although it be authenticated beyond the possibility of dispute, the mind, shrinking from the contemplation, wishes to resist conviction, and relieve itself by incredulity. From this cause, perhaps, Dr. Robertson has become the apologist of the Spaniards. Yet even he admits,\* that in the short interval of fifteen years after the discovery, the natives of Hispaniola were reduced from a million to sixty thousand. Oviedo himself,† who endeavours to palliate the barbarities of his countrymen towards the Indians, by asserting that the latter were addicted to unnatural vices, confesses, that in 1535, only forty-three years posterior to the discovery of Hispaniola, and when he was on the spot, there were not left alive on that island above

\* Hist. Am. vol. 1. book 111.

† Oviedo, lib. 3. c. 6.

five hundred of the original natives, old and young; for, he adds, that all the other Indians at that time there, had been forced or decoyed into slavery, from the neighbouring islands. Sir Francis Drake, who landed at Haiti in 1585, states, that the Spaniards had then utterly exterminated the ancient Indians.

The means by which this extraordinary mortality was effected, are thus summed up with honest indignation, by Mr. Edwards. "The Spaniards distributed them (the Indians) into lots, and compelled them to dig in the mines without rest or intermission until death, their only refuge, put a period to their sufferings. Such as attempted resistance or escape, their merciless tyrants hunted down with dogs, which were fed on their flesh. They disregarded sex and age, and with impious and frantic bigotry, even called in religion to sanctify their cruelties. Some, more zealous than the rest, forced their miserable captives into the water, and after administering to them the rite of baptism, cut their throats the next moment to prevent their apostasy! Others made a vow to hang or burn thirteen every morning, in honour of our Saviour and his twelve apostles: nor were these the excesses only of a blind and remorseless fanaticism, which, exciting our abhorrence, also excites our pity. The Spaniards were actuated in many instances by such wantonness of malice, as is wholly unexampled in the wide history of human depravity. Martyr relates, that it was a frequent practice among them to murder the Indians of Hispaniola in sport, or merely, he observes, to keep their hands in use. They had an emulation which of them could most dexterously strike off the head of a man at a blow, and wagers frequently depended on this hellish exercise.\* To fill up the measure of this

\* Martyr, Dec. 1. lib. 7.

iniquity, and demonstrate to the world that the nation at large participated in the guilt of individuals, the court of Spain not only neglected to punish these enormities in its subjects, but, when rapacity and avarice had nearly defeated their own purposes, by the utter extirpation of the natives of Hispaniola, the king gave permission to seize on the unsuspecting inhabitants of the neighbouring islands, and transport them to perish in the mines of St. Domingo.\*

The destruction of the Caribs was a labour more difficult and protracted, but it was specially licensed by the Spanish sovereigns. In 1504, when general orders were given (seldom regarded) for the protection of the persons and properties of the Indians, both of the islands and the continent, the Caribs were exempted from their benefit. The royal order states, that, although due care had been taken to convert the Indians to Christianity, and to teach them to live as rational beings, by the mission of religious men, who had been well received in some of the islands, yet, in others, there was a certain race called Cannibals, which rejected the pastors, repelling them by arms, slaying the Christians, Spaniards as well as natives, or capturing them, with design to feed upon them,—that, therefore, for the service of God, the peace and security of the pacific Indians, it was proper that such offenders should be chastised; and having consulted their council, and considering that such Cannibals had contumaciously refused the oft-extended grace of reception by the church, incorporation with the faithful, and the rule of the Spanish authority; and had become hardened in their evil propensities, idolatry and the eating of human flesh, it should be lawful for all persons proceeding by royal command

\* 1 Edw. W. I. book 1. ch. 3.

to the islands or Terra Firma, to capture, make slaves, and sell them, paying the royal dues, that they might the more readily be converted to Christianity. This license, which so happily blended religious duty and commercial profit, was improved upon all occasions. And the Carib, thus given up to destruction, and hunted down as a beast of prey, would have been immediately annihilated, had not his native bravery protected him, and rendered him the dread of his irreconcilable foe. The race sustained itself, therefore, much longer than the Arrows, inhabiting their native islands in considerable numbers in the eighteenth century, where yet some of their descendants, miserably degraded, may possibly abide. We shall have occasion hereafter, in the particular account we propose of the West India Islands, to revert to their history.

XIV. Of the quadrupeds properly so called, which anciently existed in the West Indies, the Windward or Caribbean islands, possessed all the species found in the larger islands, and some which, in the latter, were unknown. All the animals of the former are still found in Guiana, and few of them in North America; which is an additional proof that the windward islands were anciently peopled from the south. These animals were the Agouti, Pecary, Armadillo, Opossum, Raccoon, Muskrat, Alco, and the smaller monkey of several varieties. These are the most general appellations; but, from the variety of Indian dialects, some of these animals have had so many names, that it is difficult to distinguish them in the accounts of the French and Spanish historians.\*

1. The Agouti is sometimes called *Couti* and *Coati*. It was corrupted into *Uti* and *Utia*, by the Spaniards; and at present is known in some parts

\* 1 Edw. W. I. book 1. ch. 4.

of the West Indies, by the terms Pucarara and Indian Coney. It is the *Mus Aguti* of Linnæus, and the *Cavy* of Pennant and Buffon.

It is of a dark colour, inclining to black, having rough, light hair, which covers every part, except the tail. It has two teeth in the upper, and as many in the lower jaw, which are as sharp as a razor. It holds its meat in the two fore paws, and its cry is like the word *Cöuye*, distinctly pronounced. Compared with the quadrupeds of Europe, it seems to constitute an intermediate species between the rabbit and the rat.\*

2. The Pecary, which was not known in the larger islands, bore as many names as the Agouti. By Rochefort it was called the *Javari* and *Pacquire*; by Dampier *Pelas*; by Acosta *Saino* and *Zaino*. It is the *Sus Tajacu* of Linnæus, and the *Pecary* and *Mexican Hog* of the English naturalists. It is said to abound still, in many of the provinces of Mexico; but, in the West India Islands, it has been long exterminated. It differs from the common hog, in the singular circumstance of having a fetid discharge from an aperture or gland on the back, erroneously supposed to be the navel; and in the colour of the bristles, which are highly ornamented, being of pale blue, tipped with white. It is said, also, to possess greater courage than the ordinary hog, and when hunted by dogs, to turn frequently and compel its enemy to retreat. Its native bravery, bringing it within the reach of fire-arms, contributed, doubtless, to its final destruction in the islands.

3. The *Armadillo* was of that species which is called the nine-banded. It is covered with a jointed shell, or scaly armour, and has the faculty of rolling itself up like the hedge-hog. The head

\* 1 Edw. W. I. book 1. ch. 4. Rochefort, book 1. ch. 11.



and snout are like those of a pig; with the latter, and with its paws, which are supplied with five sharp claws, it obtains the roots upon which it feeds. Its flesh is wholesome and delicate. It is sometimes found as large as a fox, but ordinarily much less.

4. The Opossum (or Manitou) is about the size of a large cat; has a large snout, the nether jaw shorter than the upper, as the hog; ears long, broad, and straight; the tail long, hairless towards the extremity, and turning downwards; the hair on the back is black intermingled with gray, and under the belly, and about the throat, yellowish. It is furnished with sharp claws, by which it easily climbs trees. Its ordinary food is birds, but it can live well on fruits. The female of this animal is distinguished by the wonderful property of having a pouch under the belly, wherein she receives and shelters her young.

5. The Raccoon, as well as the Opossum, is well known in North America, and was common in Jamaica until a late period, where it was eaten by all sorts of people. Its abode was chiefly in hollow trees, whence it made its path to the cane-fields, where it chiefly subsisted; a circumstance which, while it indicates its number to have been considerable, readily accounts for its destruction.

6. The Muskrat is the *Piloris* of naturalists; it burrows in the earth, and smells so strongly of musk, that its retreat is easily discovered. They abounded greatly in Martinico, and other windward islands; and its resemblance to the common rat of Europe, though four times as large, probably proved fatal to the whole race.

7. The Alco was the native dog of the new hemisphere. It differed from that of the old, chiefly in not having the power to bark. The natives of

Hispaniola fattened them with care, and accounted their flesh a great delicacy.

Of the monkey, and its varieties, it is unnecessary to say any thing.

Of these eight species of edible quadrupeds, two only, the first and the last, are now found in the islands. The Agouti is still frequently seen in Porto Rico, Cuba, and Hispaniola, and sometimes in the mountains of Jamaica. From these sources the supply of animal food would have been insufficient for the population of the islands; but nature furnished the inhabitants with two extraordinary creatures, both of which were, and still are, not only used as food, but accounted superior delicacies. These are the Iguana and the mountain-crab.

8. The Iguana, commonly written Guana, is a species of lizard—a class of animals about which naturalists are not agreed, whether to rank them with quadrupeds, or to degrade them to serpents. From the alligator, the most formidable of the family, measuring sometimes twenty feet in length, the gradation is regular, in diminution of size, to the small lizard of three inches; nearly the same figure and conformation prevailing in each. The Iguana is commonly about three feet long, and proportionably bulky. It lives chiefly among the fruit trees, and is perfectly gentle and innoxious. They take their colour, it is said, from the soil on which they are bred, which has given occasion to the Portuguese to consider them a species of the camelion. In some islands, the females are of a light green, checkered with black and white spots, and the males are gray: in others, the last are black, and the females of a light gray, mixed with black and green; and in some places, both males and females have their scales so variegated and glittering, that they look as if clothed in cloth of silver and

gold. M. Labat speaks of a fricassied Guana with high approbation; he compares it to chicken, for the whiteness of its flesh and the delicacy of its flavour;\* and he gives the following minute account of the manner of catching it: "We were attended," says he, "by a negro, who carried a long rod; at one end of which was a piece of whip-cord with a running knot. After beating the bushes for some time, the negro discovered our game basking in the sun on the dry limb of a tree. Thereupon he began whistling with all his might, to which the Guana was wonderfully attentive, stretching out his neck, and turning his head, as if to enjoy it more fully. The negro approached him, still whistling, and advancing his rod gently, began tickling with the end of it the sides and throat of the Guana, who seemed much pleased with the operation, for he turned on his back, and stretched himself out like a cat before the fire, and at length fairly fell asleep; which the negro perceiving, dexterously slipt the noose over his head, and with a jerk brought him to the ground; and good sport it afforded, to see the creature swell like a turkey-cock, at finding himself entrapped. We caught others in the same way, and kept one of them alive seven or eight days; but," continues the reverend historian, "it grieved me to the heart, to find that he thereby lost much delicious fat."

XV. The Mountain Crabs are among the most astonishing wonders of nature. "These animals," says Du Tertre, "live not only in a kind of orderly society in their retreats in the mountain, but regularly, once a year, march down to the sea-side, in a body of some millions at a time. As they multiply in great numbers, they choose the months of April and May to begin their expedition, and then sally

\* Tom. 3. p. 315.

out from the stumps of hollow trees, from the clefts of rocks, and from the holes which they dig for themselves under the surface of the earth. At that time, the whole ground is covered with this band of adventurers; there is no setting down one's foot without treading upon them. The sea is their place of destination, and to that they direct their march with right-lined precision. No geometrician could send them to their destined station by a shorter course; they neither turn to the right nor the left, whatever obstacles intervene, and even if they meet with a house, they will attempt to scale the walls, to keep the unbroken tenor of their way. But though this be the general order of their route, they, upon other occasions, are compelled to conform to the face of the country, and if it be intersected by rivers, they are seen to wind along the course of the stream. The procession sets forward from the mountains with the regularity of an army under the guidance of an experienced commander. They are commonly divided into battalions, of which the first consists of the strongest and boldest males, that, like pioneers, march forward to clear the route and face the greatest dangers. The night is their chief time of proceeding, but if it rains by day, they do not fail to profit by the occasion, and they continue to move forward in their slow, uniform manner. When the sun shines, and is hot upon the surface of the ground, they make a universal halt, and wait until the cool of the evening. When they are terrified, they march back in a confused, disorderly manner, holding up their nippers, with which they sometimes tear off a piece of the skin, and leave the weapon where they inflicted the wound.

When, after a fatiguing march, and escaping a thousand dangers, for they are sometimes three months in getting to the shore, they have arrived

at their destined port, they prepare to cast their spawn. For this purpose the crab has no sooner reached the shore, than it eagerly goes to the edge of the water, and lets the waves wash over its body two or three times, to take off the spawn. The eggs are hatched under the sand ; and soon after, millions at a time of the new-born crabs are seen quitting the shores, and slowly travelling up to the mountains.\*

“The old crabs having thus disburdened themselves, generally regain their habitations by the latter end of June. In August they begin to fatten, and prepare for moulting ; filling up their burrows with dry grass and leaves, and abundance of other materials. When the proper period comes, each retires to his hole, shuts up the passage, and remains quite inactive until he gets rid of his old shell, and is fully provided with a new one. How long they continue in this state is uncertain, but the shell is first observed to burst at the back and the sides, to give a passage to the body, and the animal extracts its limbs from all the other parts gradually afterwards. At this time the flesh is in the richest state, and covered only with a tender membranous skin, variegated with a multitude of reddish veins ; but this hardens gradually, and soon becomes a perfect shell, like the former. It is, however, remarkable, that during this change, there are some stony secretions always formed in the bag, which waste and dissolve, as the creature forms and perfects its new crust.”\*

Many people, in order to eat of this singular animal in the highest perfection, cause them to be dug from the earth in the moulting state ; but they are usually taken from the time they begin to move of themselves, until they reach the sea ; during

\* Browne's Hist. of Jamaica.

this period they are in spawn, and are considered by those who have feasted upon them as one of the choicest morsels in nature. The observation, therefore, of Du Tertre, is neither hyperbolical nor extravagant, when, speaking of the various species of this animal, he terms them "a living and perpetual supply of manna in the wilderness, equalled only by the miraculous bounty of Providence to the children of Israel, when wandering in the desert." "They are a resource," continues he, "to which the Indians have at all times resort: for when all other provisions are scarce, this never fails them." This profusion of animal food does not now exist, though this crab is still found in the larger islands; and Mr. Edwards observes, at the time when he wrote his history, that its extinction was probably at hand.\*

XVI. Of the serpent tribe there are many varieties, and some of them very large, and as thick as a man's arm. But there are few, if any, venomous. Some authors assert, that Martinico and St. Lucia have two species that are very poisonous. But this is denied by Browne, Charlevoix, Hughes, and Edwards. The last writes, "that during a residence of eighteen years in Jamaica, I neither knew nor heard of any person being hurt from the bite of any one species of the numerous snakes or lizards known in that island. Some of the snakes I have myself handled with perfect security. I conclude, therefore, (notwithstanding the contrary assertion of Du Tertre respecting Martinico and St. Lucia,) that all the islands are providentially exempt from this evil. Nevertheless, it must be admitted, that the circumstance is extraordinary; inasmuch as every part of the continent of America, but especially those provinces which lie under the equator,

\* (1793.)—1 Edw. W. I. book I. ch. 4.



abound in a high degree with serpents, whose bite is mortal.\*

XVII. Of the lizard species, the same author says, "the crocodile, or alligator, is indeed sometimes discovered on the banks of the rivers; but notwithstanding all that has been said of its fierce and savage disposition, I pronounce it, from my own knowledge, a cautious and timid creature, avoiding, with the utmost precipitation, the approach of man. The rest of the lizard kind are perfectly innocent and inoffensive. Some of them are even fond of human society. They embellish our walks by their beauty, and court our attention by gentleness and frolic; but their kindness, I know not why, is returned by aversion and disgust."†

We have already spoken of the Guana, and will notice here two other remarkable species of the lizard. The Gobe Mouche, or Fly-Catcher, so called from their ordinary exercise, are the least of the reptiles in the islands. They are in figure like those called in France and Italy *Stellions*. Some seem covered with gold and silver brocade; others with a mixture of green and gold, and other delightful colours. They are perfectly harmless, and so familiar, that they boldly enter the dwelling-houses in search of their prey, which they pursue with much nimbleness and dexterity: they will even run upon the table when spread for meals, and upon the persons of those sitting round it, who suffer this freedom on account of the beauty and cleanliness of the animal. In the night, they bear a part in the concert of the Anolis, and other small lizards. To propagate their species, they lay eggs as big as peas, which, having covered with earth, they leave to be hatched by the sun. When killed, which is easily done, by reason of their attention in pursuit

\* 1 Edw. W. I. book 1. ch. 1

† Ibid.

of their game, they immediately lose their lustre; the gold and azure, and all the sparkling beauty of their skin vanishes, and they become pale and earthy.

Like the chamelion, they readily take the colouring of the substance on which they dwell. Those on the palm-tree are green, like its leaves; on the orange-tree they are yellow, as its fruit; nay, it is said, that some who frequented a chamber, in which was a bed with curtains of changeable taffeta, had young ones whose bodies were enamelled with colours corresponding with those of the furniture.\*

Another species of the lizard has been called the land-pike, from its likeness in figure, skin, and head, to the fish of that name. It is not more than fifteen inches in length; has four feet so short and weak, that it can only crawl along the ground; its skin is covered with small shining scales of a silver-gray colour. It dwells among rocks, and hollow places; and in the night-time makes a hideous noise, more sharp and grating to the ear than that of frogs. It is commonly seen in the evening only; and its motion being somewhat like that of the serpent, is apt to frighten the unwary beholder.†

XVIII. 1. Scorpions are common in the islands, similar to those in the south of Europe, and in Africa, but they are not so venomous.

2. There are here also remarkable insects. Snails abound called Soldiers, from their instinct in seeking a habitation in the shells of other animals, having none peculiar to themselves. They are usually found in the shells of Periwinkles, and other fish cast up by the sea. They are armed each with a claw, somewhat like that of a crab, with which they fasten so firmly on what they seize, as either to take out the piece, or to leave the claw,

\* Davies' Hist. of the Carib. lib. 1. chap. 13.

† Ibid

when forced away ; with this weapon also they contend with each other for a favourite dwelling. They move faster than the common snail, and leave no slimy trail behind them.

3. Several species of fire-flies give a magical brilliancy to the night ; among which the *Cucuyos* is most distinguished. It is the size of, and not much unlike the locust, dark in colour ; and has two hard and strong wings, beneath which are two lesser and membranous ones, visible only when it flies. It emits a vivid light, from a globular prominence near each eye, and from its sides, in the act of respiration. This light is so strong, that we are told the Indians were glad to have the insects in their cabins to serve them as lamps, and that it is sufficient to enable one to write and read. A Spanish historian relates that the natives of Hispaniola used these flies, fastened to their hands and feet, as torches to hunt by in the night ; and that in their nocturnal dances, they rubbed their naked bodies with the phosphoric matter, which gave them the appearance of demons covered with flames.

These flies are easily taken in the night, by turning a lighted stick in the air, which they immediately approach, and may be then readily struck down. They entirely disappear during the day.

*Mons. du Montel* gives the following description of them, in a letter to a friend : “ When in the island of Hispaniola, I have often, in the beginning of the night, walked about our huts to observe these little wandering stars. It was most pleasant to see them about those great trees which bear a kind of figs, sometimes obscured by the thick boughs, so that their light came to us in occasional gleams, and at other times in full radiance ; or to behold them on the adjacent orange-trees, which they seemed to set on fire, gilding those beautiful fruits, enamelling their flowers, and giv-

ing such lustre to their leaves, that their naturally delightful verdure was extremely increased by the pleasant combination of so many lights. I wished myself at that time the art of painting, that I might represent a night enlightened, and as it were turned into day by so many fires, and so pleasant and luminous a landscape. Think it not much that I am so long about the story of a fly, since *Du Bartas* sometimes gave it a place among the birds, and in the fifth day of his first week speaks very nobly of it in these terms :

'New Spain's *Cucuyo* in his forehead brings  
Two burning lamps, two underneath his wings;  
Whose shining rays serve oft in darkest night,  
The embroiderer's hand in royal works to light:  
Th' ingenious turner, with a wakeful eye,  
To polish fair his purest ivory;  
The usurer to count his glistering treasures;  
The learned scribe to limn his golden measures.'

"If five or six of these flies were put into a vessel of fine crystal, no doubt the light of them would be answerable to the poet's description, and be a living and incomparable torch."\*

We have heard of English ladies at Calcutta, where fire-flies of a less size abound, who have used them as ball-room ornaments in a way not less fanciful than ingenious. They inclosed them in small pods of fine shear-muslin, which they fastened to their hair and dress, and thus moved in a blaze of living brilliants.

4. There are also some large insects called Phalanges, of singular and diversified forms. Some have two snouts, like the proboscis of an elephant, one turning upwards, the other downwards. Some have three horns; one rising from the back, the others from the head, which, like the body, is of jet shining black. Others have one great horn,

\* Davies' Hist. Carib. lib. 1. ch. 14.

about five inches in length, much after the fashion of a woodcock's bill, very smooth on the upper side, and downy on the lower, which, rising from the back, reaches in a direct line to the head, on which is another, like that of the horned beetle, black as ebony, and transparent as glass. This variety has the body of the colour of a withered leaf, smooth and flourishing like damask; large, yellow, and firm eyes, a wide mouth, and teeth like a saw. The traveller last above quoted, describes one of these flies as about three inches in length; the head azure, not unlike that of a grasshopper, save that the eyes were green as an emerald, and surrounded by a small streak of white: the upper side of the wings of a bright violet colour, damasked with several compartments of carnation, divided and relieved by a natural thread of silver, and disposed with beautiful symmetry. The nether part of the body is of the colour of the head, and has six black feet. When the outer wings were expanded, there appeared beneath two others, thinner than silk, and of a deep scarlet colour.\*

5. Among the spiders, there is a species remarkable for monstrous size and figure, being so great, that when the legs are spread abroad, they take up a larger space than the palm of a man's hand. The body consists of two parts, whereof one is flat; and the other, round, small at one end like a pigeon's egg. They have a hole in the back; the mouth cannot be easily discerned, being covered with hair, of a light gray, sometimes mixed with red. They are armed with two sharp tushes, of a solid substance, and black colour, so smooth and shining that some curious persons have them set in gold for tooth-picks; which are much esteemed by those who fancy them possessed of virtue to prevent pain.

\* Davies' Carib. Isl. lib. c. 14.

When grown, they are covered with a swarthy down, soft and close as velvet; and are supported by ten feet, which issue from the fore-part of the body, hairy, four-jointed, and armed with claws. They cast their skins yearly, and the exuvia presents the perfect figure of the animal. They feed on flies, and their webs are so strong that small birds have difficulty to escape, when entangled in them.\*

6. The insect called the *flying tiger*, receives its name, because its body is chequered with spots, like that of the forest tyrant. It is of the size of the horned beetle; the head is sharp, in which are set two large eyes, green and sparkling as an emerald; it is also furnished with two strong and sharp hooks, with which it holds its prey whilst it feeds upon it. The body is covered with a hard and swarthy crust, which serves for armour; beneath the outer wings, which are also of a solid matter, are four lesser ones, thin and transparent. It has six legs, each with three joints, and set thick with bristles. During the day, it is incessantly employed in catching other insects, and at night pours from the trees a song like the Cigale.†

XIX. In addition to these productions of the land, the woods, the marshes, and the coast, abound with wild fowl, of great variety and excellent flavour. We shall notice such only as are remarkable for richness of plumage, or peculiarity of form or habits.

1. As the voyager approaches the islands, he is greeted even at a great distance by a species of bird to which the French have given the name of *Frigates*, on account of the length and lightness of their flight. Their bodies are of the size of a drake's, but their wings much larger; the feathers

\* Davies' Carib. Isl. lib. c. 14.

† Ibid.



on the back are sometimes black, at others gray ; the belly and wings commonly white. They feed on fish, which they catch with great ease and dexterity, as in their rapid and graceful flight they skim the wave. To the flying-fish they are fatal enemies. They watch his egress from the water, and seize him almost before he has left it. Most probably these birds marshalled Columbus the road to the discovery.

2. The Flamingo has a body in form and size similar to the wild goose, with long neck, and legs which raise it three feet from the ground. When full grown and of mature age, its colour is a bright carnation, and the wings sometimes variegated with black and white feathers. It is a gregarious bird, and has the senses of hearing and smelling very acute, so that it is difficult to approach it. To avoid surprize, the flocks keep in the midst of fens, whence they may at a great distance perceive their enemies. One of the party is always on guard, whilst the rest are engaged in seeking food. When the huntsmen of Hispaniola would kill some of these birds, which are there very common, they take the wind of them, cover themselves with an ox-hide, and creep on their hands and feet until they reach a spot whence they may be sure to kill. The birds, accustomed to see the wild oxen come from the mountains to the watering-places below, are readily deceived by this wile. They are ordinarily fat, and accounted delicate food. The skins, which are covered with soft down, are rendered precious by their beautiful colouring.

3. Among the other water-fowl of the islands, may be enumerated Geese, a great variety of Ducks, Moor-hens, Plover, Craw-fowls, &c.

4. Of land-fowl we may mention Turkeys, several species of the Wild-cock and Pheasants, which, on account of their beautiful plumage, are called

Pintadoes; Partridges, Turtles, Ravens, Woodpeckers, Blackbirds, Thrushes, Parrots of many species, Ortolans, and the wonderful Colibri, or Humming-bird. We shall remark only on the three last.

5. Either the beauty or loquacious faculty of the parrot, has made the whole genus familiarly known, from the small, simple, and uniform-coloured Paraquito, to the large, glaring, gaudy, and screaming Mackaw. There are two varieties of this bird that are particularly noticed by Rochefort, and are called by him the *Arras* and the *Canides*, which may be properly described here.

The first are as large as the pheasant, having a big head, sprightly and stedfast eyes, crooked beak, and a long tail of very fine feathers of several colours. Some have the head, the upper part of the neck, and the back, of a bright sky-colour; the belly, the lower part of the neck, and the wings, of a pale yellow; and the tail all red. Others have almost all the body of a flame-colour, and the wings variegated with yellow, azure, and red. Others, again, have all their parts diversified with red, blue, green, and black. They commonly fly in flocks; are either very bold and daring, or extremely stupid, for they are not startled at the discharge of a gun, and if not hurt by the first shot, will await a second. They are easily tamed, and may be taught to speak, but their tongues are too thick to do it so plainly as the other kinds of parrots.

The *Canides* is much of the size of the *Arras*, but of a more beautiful plumage, and distinguished for its gentle disposition, its capacity and powers of speech. The following description of an individual is taken from Rochefort. "It deserves to be numbered," says he, "among the most beautiful birds in the world. I took so particular notice of it, having had them in my hands many times, that

I have the ideas of it still fresh in my memory. Under the belly, wings, and neck, it was of a waving aurora colour ; the back, and one-half the wings, of a very bright sky colour ; the tail, and greater feathers of the wing, were mixed with a sparkling carnation, diversified with a sky colour as upon the back, a grass-green, and a shining black, which very much added to the gold and azure of the other plumage. But the most beautiful part was the head, covered with a murey down, chequered with green, yellow, and pale blue, which reached down wavingly to the back ; the eyelids were white, and the apple of the eye yellow and red, as a ruby set in gold. It had upon the head a certain tuft or cap of feathers of a vermilion red, sparkling like a lighted coal, which was encompassed by several other lesser feathers of a pearl colour."

"He spoke the Dutch, Spanish, and Indian languages, and in the last sung airs as a natural Indian. He also imitated the cries of all sorts of poultry, and other creatures about the house ; he called all his friends by their names and surnames ; flew to them as soon as he saw them, especially if he were hungry. If they had been absent, and he had not seen them for a long time, he expressed his joy at their return by certain merry notes ; when he had sported himself until they were weary of him, he went away and perched himself on the top of the house, and there he talked and sung, and played a thousand tricks, laying his feathers in order, and dressing and cleaning himself with his beak. He was easily kept, for not only the bread commonly used in the island, (Cura-coa,) but all the fruits and roots growing there, were his ordinary food ; and when he had more given him than he needed, he carefully laid up the remainder, under the leaves wherewith the house was covered, and took it when he wanted. In a

word, I never saw a more loving or more amiable bird : it was a present for any prince, if it could have been brought over the sea. It was originally brought from the Carib islands to Curacoa."

6. The most delicious bird in the West Indies, for the table, is the *Ortolan*, or *October Bird*. It is the *Emberiza Oryzivora* of Linnæus, or Rice-bird of South Carolina, and is known on the Chesapeake and Delaware bays as the *Reed-bird*. They are accounted birds of passage in North America, as well as in the West Indies. They arrive in Carolina, and on the waters of the middle states, in September, to feed on the rice and the seeds of the reed, and they retire from the former in about three weeks, when the rice begins to harden ; and from the latter with the first frost. In October they visit Jamaica, and the other islands, to feed on the seeds of the guinea-grass. At their first arrival at either of these places, they are thin and scarce edible, but in a few days they become very fat and delicious.

7. A bird not so big as the end of one's little finger might be supposed a mere creature of imagination, were it not seen in infinite numbers and great variety, and as common as butterflies on a summer's day, sporting in the fields of America, from flower to flower, extracting their sweets with its little bill.

The smallest humming-bird is about the size of a hazel-nut. The feathers of its wings and tail are black ; but those on its body and under its wings are of a greenish brown, with a fine red cast or gloss, which no silk or velvet can imitate. It has a small crest on its head, green at the bottom, and, as it were, gilded at the top, and which sparkles in the sun like a little star in the middle of its forehead. The bill is black, straight, and slender, and of the length of a small pin. The larger kinds are nearly half as big as the common wren, and are va-

riously decorated, but all remarkable for the extraordinary splendour and agreeable contrasts of their plumage.

It is inconceivable how much these add to the high finish and beauty of a rich, luxurious western landscape. As soon as the sun is risen, the humming-birds of different kinds are seen fluttering about the flowers, without ever lighting upon them. Their wings are in such rapid motion, that it is impossible to discern their colours, except by their glittering. They are never still, but continually in motion, visiting flower after flower, and extracting its honey as if with a kiss. For this purpose they are furnished with a forked tongue, that enters the cup of the flower, and extracts its nectared tribute. Upon this they alone subsist. The rapid motion of their wings has a humming sound, whence they have their name.

Their nests are not less curious than their plumage. They are about the size and shape of a hen's egg cut in two, of cotton, fine moss, and fibres of vegetables, and warmly lined with very fine cotton or other vegetable down. They are suspended in the air on the remote branches of the trees, and carefully concealed beneath the foliage. The hen lays two eggs at a time, and never more, about the size of small peas, very white, and sparsely speckled with yellow. During incubation, which continues twelve days, she never leaves the nest, except for a short time, morning and evening, to take food. Her absence is supplied by the male; for, as the egg is so small, a short exposure to the atmosphere would injure its contents. The young, when hatched, are of the size of a blue-bottled fly.

In the warm parts of America, where flowers are constantly found, these birds flutter all the year round; but in other parts, they appear only during the summer. It is doubtful whether they have a

continued note. All travellers agree, that, beside the humming noise produced by their wings, they have a little interrupted chirrup; but Labat asserts, that they have a pleasing melancholy melody in their voices, though small, and proportioned to the organs which produce it. The Indians formerly made great use of the plumage of this bird in adorning themselves, and some European ladies have not disdained to set off their beauty by ear-pendants made of it.

8. The Indians practised an ingenious mode for taking water-fowl, which is in use among the people of the East, particularly the Chinese, at the present day. In the ponds where these birds resort, they throw calabashes, with which they soon grow familiar. The sportsman having adapted one of these gourds to his head, with apertures for the sight and the breath, cautiously entered the water, either gently swimming, or walking where the stream was shallow, with his head only above the water, until he got among the fowl, when, seizing one at a time by the feet, and dragging it by a sudden jerk under the surface, he fastened it to his girdle, and thus loaded himself with as many as he could carry away, without alarming the rest.

XX. The sea and the rivers, as well as the air and earth, poured forth abundant treasures for the sustenance of man, in a vast variety of excellent fish and amphibious animals, which the Indians of the coast were very expert in taking. We shall notice particularly here, the Remora, the Manati, and the Turtle.

1. The Remora received that name from the French, from sticking to the ship as if it would stop her course. It was called by the natives *Guaycan*, and by the Spaniards *Reverso*, because it is commonly caught hanging by the back on sharks and



other fish.\* It is about two feet in length, and proportionably large: has no scales, but is covered with an ash-coloured skin, which is as glutinous as that of an eel. The upper jaw is little shorter than the lower; instead of teeth it has little risings, strong enough to break what it would swallow. The eyes are very small, of a yellow colour. It has fins, and a certain plume, as some other sea-fishes have; but what is most remarkable, it has on the head an oval piece like a crown, which is flat and streaked above with several lines, which make it look bristly. By this part the fish adheres tenaciously to the object to which it attaches itself.

“The Indians employed the *Remora*,” says Oviedo, “as falconers employed hawks. It was kept for this purpose, and properly fed. The owner, on a calm morning, carried it out to sea, secured to his canoe by a small but strong line, many fathoms in length; and the moment it sees a fish in the water, though at a great distance, it starts away with the swiftness of an arrow, and soon fastens upon it. The Indian, in the mean time, loosens and lets go the line, which is provided with a buoy that keeps on the surface of the sea, and serves to mark the course which the *Remora* has taken, and he pursues it in his canoe until he conceives his game to be nearly exhausted and run down. He then, taking up the buoy, gradually draws the line towards the shore; the *Remora* still adhering with inflexible tenacity to its prey, and it is with great difficulty that it is made to quit its hold.” It is said, the reader may believe it or not, that the *Turtle* and the *Manati* were both taken in this manner.†

2. The *Manati*, called by the French *Lamantin*,

\* P. Martyr, Dec. 1. lib. 3. Munoz, lib. 5.

† Oviedo. Herrera. P. Martyr, Dec. 1. lib. 2. 1 Edw. W. I. book 1. ch. 4.

and by the British sailors the Sea-cow, though now scarce on the shores of the West Indies, is still caught there. It is commonly from ten to eighteen feet long, huge and unwieldy, and weighs from twelve to fifteen hundred weight. The head has some resemblance to that of a cow. It has small eyes, and a thick skin of a dark colour, wrinkled in some places, and thinly covered with hair, which was sometimes used by the Indians as a buckler. Instead of fins, it has under the belly two short feet, furnished with four fingers each, and apparently too weak to sustain so heavy a body. It does not quit the water, but lives on the grass and herbage which grows at the bottom of the sea. The female is disburthened of her young much after the manner of cows, and has two teats, where-with she suckles them. She brings forth two calves at a time, which do not forsake the old one until they no longer require milk, and can feed on the grass as she does. Acosta, who was a good Catholic, says this animal was excellent food, but he adds, "I scrupled to eat it on Friday, *being doubtful whether it was flesh or fish.*"

P. Martyr relates, that one of these animals had been taken whilst young, and placed in a lake of Hispaniola, by a native Cacique, where it became exceeding tame, grew to great bulk, and lived twenty-five years. The reader will not object to Martyr's account, as given in the translation of Eden. "The king nourished this fish, certain days, at home, with the bread of the country, made of the root of *Yucca* and *Panycke*, with such other roots as men are accustomed to eat. Whatsoever is written of the delphines of *Baian* or *Arion*, is much inferior to the doings of this fish; which, for her gentle nature, they named *Matum*, that is, gentle or noble. Therefore, whensoever any of the king's familiars, especially such as are known to her, re-

sort to the banks of the lake, and call *Matum*, *Matum*, then she, (as mindful of such benefits as she hath received of men,) lifteth up her head, and cometh to the place whither she is called, and there receiveth meat at the hands of such as feed her. If any, desirous to pass over the lake, make signs and tokens of their intent, she boweth herself to them, therewith, as it were, gently inviting them to amount upon her, and conveyeth them safely over. It hath been seen, that this monstrous fish hath, at one time, safely carried over ten men, singing and playing. But if by chance, when she lifted her head, she espied any of the Christian men, she would immediately plunge down again into the water, and refuse to obey, because she had once received injury at the hands of a certain wanton young man among the Christians, who had cast a sharp dart at her, although she were not hurt, by reason of the hardness of her skin, being rough, and full of scales and knobs. Yet, did she bear in memory the injury she had sustained, with so gentle a revenge, requiting the ingratitude of him, which had dealt with her so ungently. From that day, whensoever she was called by any of her familiars, she would at first look circumspectly about her, lest any were present apparelled after the manner of the Christians. She would oftentimes play and wrestle upon the bank, with the king's chamberlains; and especially with a young man whom the king favoured well, being also accustomed to feed her. She would be sometimes as pleasant and full of play, as if it had been a monkey or marmoset; and was of long time a great comfort and solace to the whole island. For no small confluence, as well of the Christians as of the inhabitants, had daily concourse, to behold so strange a miracle of nature; the contemplation whereof was no less pleasant than wonderful. But,

at length, this pleasant playfellow was lost, and carried into the sea, by the overflowing of a great river which passed through the lake.”\* This wonderful fish story, we think, is to be ranked among the many fables connected with the New World, which amused the people of Europe, the learned as well as the unlearned, for a long time after the discovery.

3. The inhabitants of most seaports of Europe, whence trade is carried on with the West Indies, are familiar with the sight and taste of the turtle of this part of the globe, and are prepared to bear testimony to its excellence as food. We allude specially to that species called by the French *Tortue Franche*; and by the English and Americans, Green Turtle.† There are, however, two other species in the American seas, which are almost as unwholesome as that of the Mediterranean and the coasts of Europe, and are chiefly valuable for their shells. The Green Turtle is taken of various sizes, up to eight hundred weight. They are commonly found of four feet and a half in length, and four feet in breadth. Dampier speaks of one taken at Port Royal, in Jamaica, that was six feet broad across the back; and says that a boy about ten years of age sailed in the shell as in a boat, from the shore to his father’s ship, which was about a quarter of a mile from land.

The Green Turtle has the fore fins of an oblong oval; those of the male furnished with two claws; hind fins broad and round at the end, with one claw; shell convex, smooth, of a reddish brown, broke with a yellow, and rayed with a deeper brown or black, sutures of the shell and edge of the side-scales waved; belly a pale yellow.

It seldom quits the sea but to deposit its eggs,

\* Dec. 3. lib. 8.

† Testudo Mydas.

or to sport in fresh water. It is on its excursions to lay, when it is usually fat and healthy, that it is commonly taken, and in the following manner, at least upon those uninhabited islands to which the Green Turtle generally resorts. The men employed in this business land about night-fall, and keep perfectly still when they see the turtle coming on shore. When she has proceeded to her greatest distance from the sea, and when she is most busily employed in scratching a hole in the sand, they sally out and surprize her, and turn her over on her back, by which she is prevented from moving. When thus secured, they go to the next, and in this manner, in less than three hours, they have been known to turn forty or fifty turtles.

The chief food of the turtle is a submarine plant which covers the bottom of the sea, not far from the shore; though they often seek their provisions among the rocks, feeding upon the moss and seaweed, and probably sometimes upon insects and other small animals. According to the relation of navigators, when the sea is calm and the weather serene, the tortoises are seen feeding on the green carpet at the bottom of the sea, where the depth is but a few fathoms. After they have fed sufficiently they seek the outlets of rivers for fresh water; there they take in a refreshing air, and then return to their former station. In the intermission of their feeding, they generally float with their heads above the surface of the water, unless they are alarmed by the motions of any hunters or birds of prey, in which case they suddenly plunge to the bottom.

Their time of coupling is from March till May; and their intercourse is of great duration. On this occasion they resort to low, flat, sandy coasts, as the sand seems a very convenient receptacle for their eggs; and in pursuit of a proper or favorite situation, they often make considerable voyages.

Their eggs are deposited in cavities in the sand, a little above the edge where the surges beat. They cover them very lightly, that the sun may communicate to them a gentle warmth, and hatch their young. Whilst they prepare for the continuation of their species, they furnish mankind and birds with a very plentiful provision; for they lay their eggs thrice, at the expiration of every fifteen days, and generally produce four score, or ninety, or even more, at each fecundation.

When the creature has selected a spot for her nest, which is generally done about the close of evening, she returns without laying that night; but, on the next, goes to deposit a part of her burthen; and having scraped a round hole about one foot in diameter, and a foot and a half deep, she leaves between eighty and ninety eggs, which are laid in the space of an hour, each nearly as big as a hen's egg. At the conclusion of about twenty-five days, the young tortoises are seen to rise out of the sand, and, without guide or instruction, march with a gentle pace to the water; but the waves unfortunately throw them back on the shore, for the first few days, during which they become the prey of the birds, who watch for them, and a very large proportion are destroyed before they obtain strength to overcome the surge, and reach the bottom of the sea. It is said, too, that the mother turtle awaits their approach to that element, in order to devour them; but this wants confirmation.

XXI. Having presented to the reader a concise account of the productions of the animal kingdom of the West Indies, we proceed to lay before him a view of some of the principal vegetable riches which blessed these climes. We may consider these under the following divisions. 1. Such as are adapted to, and used in, the arts. 2. Such as



were applied to the sustenance and refreshment of man.

Of the first we may name the Cedar, the Acajou, or Mahogany, the Acomas, Rose-wood, Indian-wood, Lignum Vitæ, Iron-wood, Brazil-wood, Yellow-wood, Green Ebony, Roucou; the Cotton-tree, the Soap-tree, the Arched Indian Fig-tree, Coral-wood, Candle-wood, and the Gourd-tree.

1. The Cedar was common, and one of the largest timber-trees of the island, growing frequently to seven feet in diameter. The trunk is covered with a rough bark, marked with longitudinal fissures, which, as well as the cones and leaves, has so disagreeable a smell of *Asafetida*, that few people care to enter a wood where any of these trees have been recently cut down. The timber, however, has a pleasant smell, is filled with a dark resinous substance, light, porous, and easily worked, and much esteemed for wainscoting, and the internal partitioning of most parts of cabinet ware. The Indians employed it for their largest canoes and periaugues.

2. The Acajou-tree is of three sorts—one, bearing fruit, we shall treat of hereafter. Of the others, one, when barked, is white, and when newly felled, is easily wrought, but soon grows so hard, that it can scarce be used. It is subject to worms, and soon rots. The other, in common use, is generally known from being much employed in the fabric of furniture. The wood is red, light, of a pleasant smell, and easily wrought; not liable to injury from the worm, and does not rot in water, when cut in proper season. It was also much used by the aborigines for making their canoes, particularly those of a large size. From a single trunk, which frequently measures from eighty to ninety feet from the base to the limbs, the Caribbeans would construct one of their periaugues capable of carrying fifty men. The tree shoots forth many

branches, which grow very close together, and serve to create that variegated appearance of the wood so much admired. The shade it affords is very delightful, and superstition affirms that it contributes to the health of those who repose under it. From both species, by an incision in the bark, a considerable quantity of gum may be extracted.

3. The Acomas grows to the height and bulk of the Acajou, and is also much esteemed by the carpenter and joiner. It bears a smooth and long leaf, and a yellow fruit of the bigness of a plum, pleasant to the eye, but too bitter to be eaten. The bark is of an ash colour, and very rough; the wood heavy and easily polished, and, according to the place where it grows, the heart is red, yellow, or violet.

4. The Rose-wood, by some called the Cyprian-wood tree, is remarkable for its beauty of form and flower, and the colour and fragrance of the wood. It grows tall and straight; is covered with boughs laden with soft leaves, downy on one side, and somewhat similar to those of the walnut-tree. During the season of the rains, it puts forth clusters of white flowers, of pleasant odour, which are succeeded by a small, blackish, and smooth seed. The bark is of a silver gray; the wood within is of a dark red, variegated with veins of different colours, and its fragrance, when wrought, has procured it the name which it bears.

5. The Indian-wood tree is not inferior in size and beauty to the Rose-wood. It flowers, like it, in the rainy season, and then renews its leaves. The outer bark is smooth, thin, and even; of a bright silver gray, in some places inclining to yellow; the inner bark is of a vermilion, and the wood beneath of a violet colour, on which account it is much esteemed. It is solid and heavy, susceptible of a fine polish, and was used by the savages for

their war-clubs. The leaves have a pleasant smell, give piquancy to sauces, in which they are sometimes employed, and are supposed to possess some medical virtues.

6. The *Lignum Vitæ* grows in great abundance in Jamaica. It is an ever-green of a dark, gloomy cast, which continues its verdure in the most drougthy seasons, and, at times, throws out a great number of blue blossoms, which are succeeded by so many berries, of a roundish form. The tree grows frequently to a very considerable size, but takes a series of years to come to perfection. The roots are thick in proportion to the growth of the tree, and run far into the ground in a perpendicular direction, contrary to the usual growth of timber-trees in that country, which generally shoot the largest prongs of their roots in a horizontal direction, and are commonly observed to run near the surface: the bark is thick and smooth; the wood of a dark olive colour, and cross-grained; the fibres running obliquely into one another, in the form of an X. It is a hard, heavy timber-wood, and suits all occasions where strength and duration are required, and its weight is no impediment. It takes a fine polish, and answers well in the turner's lathe; but is chiefly used for ship-blocks.\*

7. The Iron-wood is of two species. The first and most valuable is esteemed for its great solidity, weight, and hardness. These qualities adapted it to the fabrication of instruments of agriculture, by the aborigines. The tree is ranked among the highest and best proportioned of the islands; bears flowers of a violet colour in March and September, and is followed by a fruit about the bigness of the cherry, black, when ripe, and much sought after by the birds. The bark is of a brownish colour; the

\* Browne's History of Jamaica.

wood, when newly felled, is, except the heart, of a very bright red, but loses much of its liveliness and lustre, when exposed to the weather. The heart is of a very dark red, like that of Brazil, and so hard, as to be wrought with the greatest difficulty. But its beauty, solidity, susceptibility of polish, and incorruptibility, requite the pains taken about it. The second species differs from the first, chiefly, in being subject to worms; on which account, it is deemed less valuable.

8. The Brazil-wood, *Cæsalpinia*, though scarce, was found sometimes in the islands. It received its name from having been first carried to Europe from the Province of Brazil. The trunk grows very crooked, uneven, and full of knots. It is well known for its use in the arts, especially in that of dying. Another tree, (*Zanthoxylum*,) also used for this purpose, which, from the colour it yielded, was called the Yellow-wood, abounded in St. Croix. The Green Ebony, *Chloroxylum*, produced a grass-green dye; and was commonly used in joiners' work, because it easily takes the colour and lustre of the true ebony. Within the outer bark of the tree, there is about two inches of white inner bark; the rest, to the heart, is of a dark green, inclining to black, but, when polished, exhibits some yellow veins, which give it a marbled appearance.

9. The *Roucou*, called by the Brazilians the *Urucu*, which produces the beautiful dye Arnotto, grows to the height of the ordinary orange-tree. It bears leaves of the figure of a heart, and white flowers varied with carnation, consisting of five leaves, in form of a star, and about the bigness of a rose, which grow in bunches at the extremity of the branches. These are succeeded by little pods, which contain several seeds of the size of a small pea, surrounded by a viscous substance of a rich vermilion colour, from which the Arnotto is pre-

pared, by washing and evaporation. The wood of the tree is very fragile, and so dry that fire may be readily produced, by rubbing two pieces of it against each other. The bark is used for making lines, which are very durable, and the root, which yields the colour and scent of saffron, is sometimes employed in culinary operations. The Caribs carefully cultivated this tree in their gardens, obtaining from it the colouring with which they painted their bodies and ornamented their domestic utensils.

10. Of the Cotton-plant there were two kinds. The shrub so well known in the southern part of the United States, and a groundling which ran on the earth like an unsupported vine. The wool of the latter was preferred by the natives in the fabric of their cloths.

Of the Silk Cotton-tree, (*Bombax*,) there were two varieties; one with erect, the other with horizontal branches. It is common to the East and West Indies, and grows generally in the lowlands, and rises frequently to the height of a hundred feet and more, by a straight and well-proportioned stem. The flowers grow in large tufts, and shoot commonly in great abundance, before the leaves appear; they are moderately large, and of a dirty white colour. The trunk, while young, is always armed with thorns; but these seldom appear after it has acquired a height and strength sufficient to protect it. The cotton makes good beds, but does not bear the water for the latter's use, nor has it a staple to serve for any other purpose. The trunks of the full-grown trees were frequently used for canoes.

11. There were two sorts of trees which the islanders used instead of soap; the one having the saponaceous quality in the fruit, and the other in the root. The fruit grows in clusters, is about the

bigness of a small plum, round and yellowish, with a hard, black stone, which may be polished; the root is white and soft. Both make an excellent lather, but the former used too frequently burns the linen.

12. The Indian Fig-tree, the sovereign of the vegetable creation, itself a forest, and the wonder of tropical climes, is divided into two species by Rochefort. The one bears a small fruit without stone, which, in figure and taste, is somewhat like the French fig. In other respects, there is no resemblance. The leaf is of a different figure, and much narrower. The bulk of the stem of the tree is immense; the trunk shooting forth on the sides from the very root to the place where the boughs begin, certain excrescences, which reach four or five feet about, making deep cavities, which stand like so many niches. These excrescences, which are of the same substance as the body of the tree, are inclosed by the same bark that covers it, and are seven or eight inches thick, proportionably to the trunk they encompass. The wood is white and soft, and from the shoots of the trunk planks for flooring are frequently cut, without injury to the tree; for it recovers so rapidly, that in a short time it can scarce be perceived that any thing has been taken from it. The same author notices one of these trees in the island of Tortoises, north of Hispaniola, which would shelter two hundred men under the shade of its branches.

The other species, described by Milton as—

The Fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renowned,  
But such as at this day to Indians known,  
In Malabar and Decan. spreads her arms;  
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bearded twigs take root, and daughters grow  
Above the mother tree, a pillar'd shade,  
*High overarched, and echoing walks between.*

PARADISE LOST, Book ix.



According to Rochefort, it thrives best in fenny places, and on the sea-side. Its leaf is green, thick, and long. The branches, which bend to the ground, no sooner reach it than they take root and grow into other trees, which again produce others, so that, in time, they spread over all the good ground in the vicinity, rooting out and destroying every other species of vegetation. The labyrinth of its arches harbours the wild boar and other beasts, and formerly proved a place of refuge and defence to the hunted aborigines. The bark affords excellent tannin.\*

13. There grows in several of the islands a small shrub, which bears a seed as red as coral, in bunches at the end of its branches, which gives them an extraordinary lustre, and the name of Coral-wood to the plant. The seed has a small black spot at one end, which is by some deemed a blemish, but by others a beauty. It is used for bracelets and other ornaments.

The Candle-wood is charged with an aromatic gum, which burns with a sweet scent and clear flame, for which reason it is much sought after by the inhabitants, for firing, and for candles and torches.

14. The Gourd or Calabash-tree, *Crescentia*, grows chiefly in the lowlands, and seldom rises above sixteen or twenty feet in height. The trunk is irregular, and the branches crooked and spreading; they bear all their leaves in tufts, and are sometimes adorned with a few single flowers, from space to space. The wood is tough and flexible, and for these qualities, is much sought by the

\* This tree is called in the East Indies the Banyan. Mr. Marsden gives the following account of the dimensions of one near Manjee, twenty miles west of Patna, in Bengal: diameter, 363 to 373 feet; circumference of the shadow at noon, 1116 feet; circumference of the several stems, in number fifty or sixty, 921 feet.—Hist. Sumatra, p. 131.

coachmakers. The shell of the fruit makes a light and convenient drinking-cup, and is frequently large enough to hold a gallon. It is said to withstand the fire sufficiently to be used as a pot for boiling. The thicker parts of it are frequently used for button-moulds.

XXII. The vegetable productions adapted to the sustenance and refreshment of man, may be considered under the broad divisions of fruits and roots.

Of the first, we may notice the Anana, or Pine Apple, Goyava, Papaw, Avocato, or Alligator Pear-tree, Momin, Junipa, Raisin-tree, the Acajou, Icaco, Monbain, several varieties of the Palm, the Cacao, the Cassia-tree, the Banana and Plantain, Prickly Pear, Capsicum, or Indian Pepper, Pimento or Alspice, and several varieties of Pulse, Maize, &c.

Of esculent roots we may enumerate the Manioc, or Cassava, the Yam, and the Sweet Potato.

1. The Anana, or Pine Apple, is esteemed the first of all fruits; and this will probably be the opinion of the reader, after he shall have perused the following quaint description from Rochefort, should his own knowledge not have satisfied him of the fact. "It is so delightful to the eye, and of so sweet a scent, that nature may be said to have been extremely prodigal of what was most rare and precious in her treasury to this plant. It grows on a stalk about a foot high, encompassed by about fifteen or sixteen leaves, as long as those of some kinds of thistles, broad as the palm of a man's hand, and in figure like those of aloes; they are pointed at the extremity, as those of *corn-glades*, somewhat hollow in the midst, and having on both sides little prickles, which are very sharp."

"The fruit, which grows between these leaves, straight up from the stalk, is sometimes about the

bigness of a melon ; its figure is much like that of a pine apple ; its rind, which is full of little compartments like the scales of fish, of a pale-green colour, bordered with carnation upon a yellow ground, hath on the outside several small flowers, which, according to the different aspects of the sun, seem to be of so many different colours, as may be seen in the rain-bow ; as the fruit ripens, most of these flowers fall. But that which gives it a far greater lustre, and acquired it the supremacy among fruit, is, that it is crowned with a great posie, consisting of flowers and several leaves, solid and jagged about, which are of a bright red colour, and extremely add to the delightfulness of it."

"The meat or pulp which is contained within the rind, is a little fibrous, but, put into the mouth, is turned all to juice ; it hath so transcendant a taste, and so particular to itself, that those who have endeavoured to make a full description of it, not able to confine themselves to one comparison, have borrowed what they thought most delicate in the peach, the strawberry, the Muscadine grape, and the pippin, and having said all they could, have been forced to acknowledge, that it hath a certain particular taste, which cannot easily be expressed."

"The virtue, or shoot by which this plant may be propagated, lies not in its root, nor yet in a small red seed, which is many times found in its pulp ; but in that garland, wherewith it is covered ; for, as soon as it is put in the ground, it takes root, shoots forth leaves, and at the year's end produces new fruit. It happens, sometimes, that these fruits are charged with three posies or crowns, all which have the virtue of propagating their species ; but every stalk bears fruit but once a year."

"There are three or four kinds, which the inhabitants distinguish by the colour, figure, or scent,

to wit, the white Anana, the pointed, and that called the Pippin or *Renette*. This last is more esteemed than the other two, inasmuch as being ripe, it hath, as to the taste, all the rare qualities before described; it hath also a sweeter scent than the others, and does not set the teeth so much an edge."

"The natural Indians of the country, and the French who live in the islands, made of this fruit an excellent drink, not much unlike Malmsey, when it hath been kept a certain time: there is also made of it a liquid conserve, which is one of the noblest and most delicate of any brought out of the Indies: they also cut the rind into two pieces, and it is preserved dry, with some of the thinnest leaves, and then the pieces are neatly joined together again, and they ice it over with sugar, by which means the figure of the leaves and fruit is perfectly preserved; and there may be seen in these happy countries, notwithstanding the heats of the torrid zone, a pleasant representation of the sad productions of winter."

The medical qualities of this plant, which, like most of the vegetable productions of America, were once deemed highly salutary, we believe are no longer in repute. The present generation are content that it should contribute to the enjoyment of health, without seeking in it a panacea for disease.

2. The Goyava is similar to the laurel in figure, save that the leaves are softer, of a brighter green, and more downy on the lower side. The bark of this tree is very thin and smooth; the branches thick and well laden with leaves, and bear, twice a year, little white flowers, which are followed by apples of the size of a pearmain, yellow and fragrant when ripe. The fruit has on the top a small posie like a

crown; and the meat within is either white or red, full of little kernels like those of the pomegranate.

3. The Papaw, (Papayer) is a tree which grows without boughs, fifteen or twenty feet high, and of a bulk proportionable to its height; hollow and spongy within, on which account it is frequently used as a conduit pipe. There are two kinds; one common to all the islands, whose leaves are divided into three points, much like that of the fig-tree. They depend from long stems, which shoot from the top of the tree, and, bending downwards, cover several round fruits, about the size of the great quince pear, which grow round the bowl to which they are fastened. The other is peculiar to St. Croix; is fairer, and has more leaves, and is more highly esteemed, on account of its fruit, which grows as large as a melon, and of the figure of a woman's breast; whence the Portuguese call it Mamao. Both species produce new fruits monthly, and bear a flower having the odour of the Jessamine. The fruit of the latter is accounted among the choicest productions of the island, having, when at maturity, a firm substance of pleasant taste, which may be cut in pieces like a melon. The rind is yellow, intermixed with certain green lines, and is filled with small seeds, round, viscous, and soft, of a piquant taste, approaching that of spice.

4. The Avocato, or Alligator Pear-tree, grows commonly to the size of our largest apple-trees, and spreads pretty wide at top; the branches are succulent and soft; the leaves oblong and veiny; and the fruit of the form of the pear. But the pulp is covered with a tough, skinny coat, and contains a large, rugged seed, which is wrapped up in one or two thin, membranous covers. The fruit is highly esteemed. The pulp is firm, and has a delicate, rich flavour, gaining on the palate of most peo-

ple, and becoming agreeable to those who do not at first like it. But it is so rich and mild, that spice, or other pungent substance is added, to give it piquancy. It seems equally agreeable to all sorts of creatures—to the horse, the cow, the dog, the cat; and to all kinds of birds.

5. The Momin-tree grows to the size of an apple-tree, and bears a large fruit of the same name. In some of the islands it is called Curaçoa, because it was originally brought from thence. The fruit is like a small cucumber, not fully ripe; is always green, and enamelled with several small partitions like scales. When mature, it is within as white as cream, of a highly agreeable flavour, compounded of acid and sweet. In the midst lies the seed, of the size and figure of a bean, very smooth, and of the colour of a touchstone, on which a piece of gold had been newly tried; for it seems to sparkle with little golden veins.

6. The Junipa grows to the size of a Chesnut-tree, with leaves similar to the Walnut; and its branches bending towards the ground make a pleasant shade. It bears a flower like the Narcissus; the wood is solid, and of a pearly-gray colour. The fruit is a species of apple, which, when ripe, has the appearance of having been baked in an oven; its taste is a pleasant acid; falling from the tree, it makes a noise like the report of a gun, which is caused by the explosion of the air contained in the pellicles that inclose the seed. The juice, though itself colourless, dyes a dark violet, and was much used by the Indians in painting their bodies; and it is said, that the flesh of the animals which feed on the fruit assumes the same tint.

7. The Raisin-tree, *Cocolobis*, called by the Caribs *Ouliem*, is stunted in growth, and creeps, in a manner, along the ground, on the sea-side; but, in good ground, it grows up high as one of the most



delightful trees of the forest. The leaves are round and thick, variegated with red and green. Beneath the bark is a soft, white substance, about two inches thick, under which the wood is of a violet colour, solid, and fit for joiners' work. The fruit might be taken for large purple grapes, but under a tender pellicle, and a thin and slightly acid pulp, is a hard stone like that of the plum.

8. The fruit-bearing Acajou, or Cashew Nut-tree, (*Anacardium*), is a tree of no great height, which spreads its branches down towards the ground. The leaves are fair and large, closing to a roundness before, and are divided by certain veins. The flowers, when first put forth, are white, but afterwards take a reddish or purple hue. They grow in clusters, and perfume the air widely around them; and do not fall until thrust off by a nut, much after the form of an ear, or hare's kidney. Under the nut grows a large and somewhat long apple, which it crowns as with a crest. The nut, when ripe, takes an olive colour, whilst the apple puts on a thin, delicate skin, of a lively vermillion. The nut is oily, but palatable. The apple is slightly acidulous and pleasant. From its juice the Indians make an excellent beverage, more intoxicating than the best French wine.

The tree bears but once a year; whence the Brazilians numbered their age by the nuts, laying up one for every year, which they kept carefully in a little basket. The seed is the nut, by which the tree is readily propagated. The shell of the nut contains a great quantity of caustic oil lodged in the cells between the laminæ, which the ladies of the colonies sometimes apply to remove the skin of the face, that a new and fairer one might grow thereon. The almond, or kernel, is of a delicate taste; but is generally eaten roasted, the shell be-

ing burned to free the kernel from the oil.\* The tree produces a great quantity of gum, not inferior to Gum Arabic in medicine or the arts.

9. The Icaco is a small plum-tree, which grows after the form of a briar; and is at all times laden with small long leaves. Twice a year it is clothed with abundance of white or violet flowers, which are followed by a small, round fruit, about the bigness of a damson, which, when ripe, takes a white or violet colour, as was the blossom.

10. The Hog-plum, (*Spondias*), with its varieties, grows very high, bears long and yellowish plums; but the stone of some species being larger than the meat about it, the fruit is not much esteemed. It produces abundantly, and the swine feeding in the forests, at the season when the fruit is ripe, are fattened by what they gather from the ground. Being propagated by slips, it was commonly used for making hedges.

11. Of the Palm, four varieties were known in the West India Islands. 1. The Prickly-palm, so called on account of the trunk, branches, and leaves being furnished with prickles very sharp, a wound from which gives great and lasting pain. Those which encompass the trunk are flat, about the length of a man's finger, smooth, and of a tawny colour, inclining to black. Its fruit grows in clusters, is round, and large as the common walnut, which it entirely resembles, and the kernels are good to eat. Of the sap drawn from this tree, the natives made a species of wine.

2. The *Franc*-palm is a straight tree, of extraordinary height, variously stated at from one hundred and thirty to two hundred feet. The roots are above ground round about the stock, two or three feet high, and about the size of a hogshead; small,

\* Browne.

in proportion to the height of the tree they sustain, but so interlaced with each other, that they afford it a substantial support. One thing peculiar to this tree is, that it is larger in circumference above than below. While young, the bark is tender, of a dark gray colour, and marked, at every foot's distance, with a circle corresponding, it is said, with the year of its growth; but which disappears, when it has attained its full size. The branches are channelled and smooth, and have on each side an infinite number of leaves, green, long, narrow, and very thin, which add much to its beauty. The tenderest of these branches, which are not yet fully blown, rise directly from the middle of the tree; while the others, which bend downwards about it, make, as it were, a rich and beautiful crown, and give it the most graceful form of vegetable creation.

The tree disburthens itself monthly of some one of its branches; and also a portion of bark from the trunk, which is of the thickness of tanned leather, and is used by the inhabitants, with the leaves, for covering the roofs of their dwellings. From the top and centre of the trunk issues a white marrow or pith, very tender and savory, tasting like a nut when raw, and, when boiled with the thin and white leaves which enfold it, like so much linen, is ranked among the most delicious dishes of the Caribbees. From the resemblance of this pith to cabbage, the tree has been called the Palm, and the Mountain, cabbage.

In addition to the foregoing particulars, Rochefort adds, "there may be easily observed a fair branch, which, rising from the top of the trunk, is always turned towards the rising sun. It is renewed every year, and when it comes out of its case, it is enamelled with an infinite number of little yellow flowers, like golden buttons, which afterward

falling, their places are supplied by certain round fruits, about the bigness of a hen's egg. They are fastened together, as it were, in one cluster; and that these flowers and fruits might be secured against the injuries of the weather, they are covered above by a thick bark, which, on the outside, is hard, and of a grayish colour, but within, a kind of vermilion gilt, closing upwards like a pyramid. This precious fan is nothing else but the case which kept in the flowers before they were fully blown, and being opened below, spreads itself into a hollow figure in the midst, and pointed at the extremities, the better to cover both the flowers and the fruit."

The *Latanier*-palm grows to a considerable height, but not large. It is without branches; the leaves, which are long, round above, and spread at the extremity like a fan, grow on stalks which spring from certain filaments that encompass the top of the trunk. The Indians covered their cots with these leaves, and from the bark of the stalks they made sieves, baskets, and other household utensils. This tree was also their armoury; from it was formed their bows, swords, and clubs, their javelins, and the points of their arrows.

The fourth and most excellent of the Palm species, indigenous to the islands, is the *Cocoa*-nut tree. It does not attain the size of the *Cocoa* of the East Indies, its ordinary height not exceeding twenty-five feet. The fruit grows upon the very trunk, at the shooting forth of the branches. It is a spherical nut, several inches in diameter, covered with a shell several lines thick, and so hard that it may be polished, and converted into bowls and cups. It is encompassed by an outward covering or pod, two or more inches in thickness, composed of filaments. The nut itself is partly hollow; the meat is very white, hard, and firmly fastened within the shell,

and has a taste somewhat like the almond. Within the cavity, which may be two-thirds of the diameter of the nut, is a pleasant and refreshing liquor, which is said to have peculiar virtue as a cosmetic, if used when the fruit is newly fallen from the tree, clearing the face of all wrinkles, and giving it a bright and vermilion colour.

12. The Cacao, from the fruit of which the rich and nourishing beverage chocolate is fabricated, was indigenous to the island of Hispaniola, and is not inferior to that of Caracas. Next to the mines and sugar plantations, it formed the most considerable source of insular wealth, in the period immediately subsequent to the discovery. The quantity exported was more than sufficient for the consumption of Spain, and a very profitable trade in the article was carried on with other countries in Europe. The Cacao of St. Domingo is more pungent than that of Caracas, and when mixed with the latter, gives to it a more delicate flavour. The cultivation of the tree has almost ceased in the island; but it is still found wild in the plain of La Vega, and in the northern provinces.\*

13. The Cassia tree is of the size and figure of the peach tree. The leaves are long and narrow, and fall off in the season of the drought, but return with the rains. They are preceded by yellow blossoms; the fruit is a pod of about an inch in diameter, and from a foot to two feet in length, divided into many cells, containing the medicinal drug which bears the name of the tree, given to it in the east. The Caribs called it *Mali Mali*. Before maturity, the hue of the fruit is green, but when ripe, it assumes a brownish, or dark violet colour.

In St. Domingo there were extensive plains covered with these trees. When the fruit is ripe and

\* M. de St. Mery, Descrip. of St. Domingo.

dry, the noise occasioned by the collision of the hard and long pods is heard at a great distance, and has been compared to the dashing of the waves on the sea-shore, and to the clashing of arms in an engagement of soldiers.

14. The Plantain, or *Banana*,\* is, for the inhabitants of the torrid zone, what the *cereal gramina*, wheat, barley, and rye, are for Western Asia and for Europe, and what the numerous varieties of rice are, for the countries beyond the Indies. In the two continents, in the islands throughout the immense extent of the equinoctial seas, wherever the mean heat of the year exceeds  $75^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit, the fruit of the Banana forms a large portion of the subsistence of man. Clavigero, Foster, and other writers, upon the authority of Oviedo, assert, that this valuable plant was brought to America, by the way of St. Domingo, by Thomas de Berlangas, a friar, in 1515, from Grand Canary. But this error has been abundantly refuted by Sir Hans Sloane, and more recently, by A. de Humboldt, who prove that every species of the Plantain grows spontaneously in all the tropical parts of the earth. Two species, the true *Platano* or *Arton*, (*Musa Paradisiaca*, Lin.) the *Camburi*, (*M. Sapientum*, Lin.) abounded in the West Indies, at the time of the discovery. They differ, chiefly, in the size of the fruit; which, of the latter, is smaller than of the former. The stalks grow from twelve to fifteen feet

\* The *Musa* was not altogether unknown to the ancients. Pliny describes it in his Natural History, lib. xii. cap. 8. And having given its specific characters, he adds that the name *Pulan*, which was given to it in the time of Alexander, was preserved at Malabar: to which Garza del Orto, a learned Portuguese physician, who resided there many years, bears witness. It is doubtful whether *Platano*, or Plantain, has been derived from the word *Pulan*. The name *Banana* is given by the French, and that of *Musa*, from the Arabic, by the Italians. By some it is called the fruit of Paradise; and is believed to be that which tempted our first parents to sin.—*Clavigero*, lib. 1. note.



high, spring from a large pear-shaped bulb, and are of a green colour, shining, spongy, and watery. The leaf is about four feet in length, and a foot and a half in breadth, of a delicate green, very thin and soft. The fruit grows at the top of the stem, in clusters comprising together, frequently, of the larger kind, from fifty to eighty; and of the smaller, from eighty to one hundred and twenty individuals, which weigh from sixty-six to eighty-eight pounds. The larger fruit grows to twelve or fourteen inches in length, bending inward at the extremity, and is about an inch and a half in thickness. The flesh is firm and solid, white before it is ripe, but yellow at maturity. It may be dressed for eating, when green, by boiling or roasting, and when ripe, is eaten raw. It is dry, mealy, and sweet, and highly nutritious. The plant propagates itself by scions, and, in good ground, spreads with great facility, and is not easily eradicated.

Perhaps there is no other plant on the globe, that produces so much nutritive substance, in proportion to the ground it occupies. It develops its clusters eight or nine months after planting, and may be gathered in the tenth or eleventh month. When the stalk is cut, there is constantly another (*pimpollo*,) which, having two-thirds of the height of the mother plant, bears fruit three months later. In this manner, a plantation of *Musa*, called in the colonies *Platanar*, is perpetuated, without other care bestowed by man than to cut the stalks of which the fruit has ripened, and to give the earth, once or twice a year, a slight dressing by digging round the roots. A spot of ground of one thousand square feet, may contain from thirty to forty plants, and will yield in the year more than four thousand pounds of nutriment. Wheat, sown in the most fertile countries of Europe, may produce, on the same space, about thirty-three pounds, and potatoes

about an hundred pounds. Hence, the product of the Banana is to that of wheat, as 133:1, and to that of potatoes as 44:1. Thus an acre cultivated with bananas, of the large species, will maintain fifty individuals, whilst the same quantity in wheat will not yield subsistence for two persons.\* Accordingly, an European newly arrived in the torrid zone, is struck with nothing so much as the extreme smallness of the spots under cultivation, around a cabin which contains a numerous family of Indians.

The ripe fruit of the Musa, when exposed to the sun, is preserved like figs. The skin becomes black, and takes a particular odour, which resembles that of smoked ham. In this state it is called *Platano Passado*, and becomes an object of commerce. It has an agreeable taste, and is very healthy. But Europeans, newly arrived, consider the ripe fruit of the *Platano Arton*, newly gathered, as ill to digest. This opinion is very ancient, for Pliny relates that Alexander forbade his army to use the bananas which grew on the banks of the Hyphasus. Meal is made from the Musa, by cutting the green fruit into slices, drying it in the sun, and pounding it, when it becomes friable; and it serves the same purposes as flour from rice or maize.

The facility with which the Banana is reproduced, gives it an extraordinary advantage over fruit-trees, and even over the bread fruit-tree, which, for eight months in the year, is loaded with farinaceous fruit. When a fruit-tree is destroyed, years are necessary to repair the loss. A plantation of bananas may be renewed from suckers in a few months.

But is this spontaneous abundance of food a

\* Humboldt's Mex. lib. 4. c. 9.

genuine blessing? To moisten our bread with the sweat of the brow is a curse only where our labour is commanded by another, or where its return is scanty or uncertain. A constant and powerful stimulus is necessary for awakening our energies, and the development of our moral and physical faculties. It cannot be more true, that our present state is one of probation, designed to prepare us for another and better mode of being, than that the decree which subjected us to labour was indispensable, in our present organization, to our temporal improvement and happiness. In those countries where the fruitful earth is most prolific, the human race is most feeble, and has been the sport of every hardy invader. It has frequently been said in the Spanish colonies, that the inhabitants of the warm regions will never awake from their apathy of ages, until the banana plantations shall be utterly destroyed. The remedy is violent, and let us hope, under the new political dispensation, will be unnecessary. When we consider, however, the facility with which our species may be supported in climes which produce the banana, we are not surprized that, in the equinoctial region of the New World, civilization commenced on the mountains, in a soil of inferior fertility, and under a sky less favourable to the development of organized beings, in whom necessity ever awakens industry. At the foot of the Cordillera, in the humid valleys of Vera Cruz, Valladolid, and Guadalupe, a man who employs merely two days in the week, by no means laboriously, may procure subsistence for a large family. Yet such is the love of his native soil, that the mountaineer, whom the frost of a single night frequently deprives of his harvest, never descends into the fertile but thinly inhabited plain, where his subsistence would be

more assured, but where the springs of life play, if not less freely, certainly less happily.

15. The Prickly Pear, called by the French *Raquette*, from the figure of its leaf, is a great thorny bush, whose stem, which is indeed a leaf, scarce rises above a foot from the ground along which the plant lies. The leaves are green, heavy, and about an inch thick, and grow one out of the other; they are armed with small sharp prickles, and some bear fruit as large as the date-plum, also prickly, red within and without, and of a delicate and grateful flavour. The shape of the fruit is somewhat like that of the fig, to which it has also a resemblance in the seed.

16. The pepper known by the Indians under the general name of *Axi*, was of several species, including the green and red peppers of our gardens, the Pimento, and the *Cayenne* of our tables. All the varieties were abundantly cultivated by the natives, and profusely used in their food. We may observe here, that there is much confusion among the discoverers, in applying the terms *Axi* and *Agi*. The first, we believe, was the generic name for pepper, and the second for esculent roots.

17. The islands abounded in esculent vegetables, among which were beans, and other pulse, differing little from the kinds commonly cultivated in our gardens. The Choco, Ochre, Lima bean, and Indian kale, were deservedly cherished. Rochefort describes a species of bean which he calls the seven years' bean, the same stalk bearing fruit seven years successively; spreading itself over trees, rocks, and whatever else it can fasten upon; and during the whole of this long period exhibiting flowers, and green and ripe fruit.

18. Of maize, or Indian corn, so universally cultivated in America, it is scarce necessary to give a

description. Two, sometimes three, crops were raised in the islands annually. It is an original gramina of America, and has been thence spread over most regions of the globe.\*

19. The Manioc, Yuca, or Cassava root, on account of its nutritious qualities, and ready convertibility into bread, is a most valuable plant, and was extensively cultivated by the indigines. It grows so abundantly, that a quantity of ground planted with it, will feed more persons than six times as much sown with wheat. It shoots forth crooked branches of the height of five or six feet, full of knots, and easily broken, and is clothed with long narrow leaves. It is propagated by planting the joints or slips, after the manner of the sugar-cane. The root of the ordinary kind attains maturity in about nine months; but there are varieties in Cayenne, called *Manioc bois blanc*, and *Manioc maipourri rouge*, which are pulled up only at the end of fifteen months.† The root possesses the extraordinary advantage of remaining uncorrupted in the ground for three years; and of being thus always safely garnered. We have already mentioned the manner in which this root was prepared for food by the Indians;‡ and that the juice of one species, (the *juca amarga*) is a mortal poison. But Rochefort assures us, that it loses this deleterious quality in four and twenty hours after expression; and Sir Hans Sloane, Dr. Darwin, Mr. Edwards, and Baron A. de Humboldt, concur in asserting, that it becomes innoxious when boiled. The aborigines resorted to this poison to free themselves from Spanish oppression; and in the “Cave of the Indians” in Haiti, lie the bones of more than four hundred, who thus destroyed themselves.§ In the modern

\* 1 Edw. W. Ind.—2 Humboldt, lib. 4. ch. ix.

† 2 Humboldt's Mex. lib. 4. chap. ix.

‡ See page 94. vol. 1.

§ Rochefort.

mode of preparation, the root, after being well washed, is reduced to a pulp on iron graters, and placed in strong linen, or palmetto bags, that the juice may be thoroughly expressed. The fecula is then dried in the sun, beaten in mortars, and carefully sifted. It is baked on griddles over proper fires, the farina being strewed thereon to such diameter and thickness as may be desired. It agglutinates as it heats, gradually hardens, and when fully baked is a wholesome, well-tasted, and nutritive bread. The expressed juice is frequently boiled, when a thick viscid scum rises, which is always thrown away; the remainder, resembling whey, is diluted, and kept for common drink, or undiluted is substituted for soup, and frequently made into sauce for fish, resembling the *Souy* brought from China.\* Humboldt informs us, however, that serious accidents sometimes happen when the juice has not been sufficiently boiled. Yet Browne (*Hist. Jam.*) says, that the root with the juice unexpressed, is eaten with impunity by the hogs.

The nutritive quality of the bread arises from the sugar it contains, mixed with a viscous matter, which unites the farinaceous molecules of the Cassava. The native Indians, who are more abstemious than the whites, consume of it about a pound a-day. The want of gluten, and the thinness of the bread, render it brittle, and difficult of transportation—an inconvenience particularly felt in long navigations. The fecula of the Manioc grated, dried, and smoked, is almost inalterable. Insects and worms never attack it, and every traveller knows in equinoctial America the advantages of the *Couaque*.†

The Abbe Raynal, amid a thousand other errors

\* Humboldt.

† Humboldt's Mex.



and perversions, asserts that the Manioc was transplanted from Africa to America, to serve for the maintenance of the negroes, and that if it existed on the continent, before the arrival of the Spaniards, it was not known by the natives of the West Indies in the time of Columbus. No error is more easily exposed. Amerigo Vespucci relates in his letter addressed to the Duke of Loraine,\* that he saw bread made of Manioc, on the coast of Paria, in 1497. "The natives," says this adventurer, in other respects by no means accurate in his recital, "know nothing of our corn and farinaceous grains; they draw their principal subsistence from a root which they reduce into meal, which some of them call *jucha*, others, *chambi*, and others, *igname*."† But what is quite as much to the point, we are told in the journal of the first voyage of Columbus,‡ that "the king" *Guacanagari*, "took a meal on board the caravel, and then went on shore, accompanied by the admiral, whom he treated with every honour, feasting him with several sorts of *ages*, shrimps, game, and other viands, with bread which they call *Cazavi*."

20. The *yam*, *igname*, (*Dioscorea Alata*,) like the *Banana*, appears proper to all the equinoctial regions. It was found under the name of *igname* by Alvarez de Cabral, at his discovery of Brazil, in 1497; and by Vespucci, three years before, on the coast of Paria. The Haitian name was *ages*, under which Columbus describes it, in the account of his first voyage; and it is also that which it bore in the times of Gacilasso, Acosta, and Oviedo, who have very well indicated the characters by which the *ages* are distinguished from the *batates*. The roots grow very large, weighing sometimes above fifty pounds; have a delicate fla-

\* Grynæus, p. 216.

† Humboldt's Mex.

‡ Boston edition, 1827. p. 170.

your, and are highly nutritious. They are propagated by planting pieces of the root, with the skin upon them, every part of which may germinate. They are commonly planted in August, and gathered in November or December. They are prepared for the table by boiling or roasting, and are more highly esteemed than the potato, to which they bear some resemblance.

21. The common potato, (*papasolanum tuberosum*), strangely called sometimes, the Irish potato, though abounding in South America, was not known in the Antilles at the period of the discovery. But the *Batates*, or sweet potato, (*convolvulus batatas*) was carefully cultivated, and formed a chief article in the list of eatables of the insular inhabitants. It has been naturalized in our country, and is so well known as to render a description of it, here, unnecessary.



## APPENDIX.

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### Note A, Vol. I. page 6.

THE following account of the voyage of Hanno, is literally translated from 1 Geog. Græc. Minor I.

The Carthagenians directed Hanno to navigate beyond the columns of Hercules, and to found Lyby-phœnician cities. Hanno set sail with a fleet of sixty ships, of fifty oars each, freighted with 30,000 men, women, and children, and with provisions and other necessaries. After our departure, and having sailed two days beyond the columns, we founded the city of Thymiaterion, which commands a vast plain. From Thymiaterion, continuing our voyage to the west, we arrived at a promontory of Lybia, named Soloe; it is covered with thick woods; we there raised an altar to Neptune. From cape Soloe, having sailed a half day, drawing towards the east, we reached a neighbouring bay. It was full of large reeds. We saw a multitude of elephants and other savage beasts feeding upon its borders. After a day's sail beyond this bay, we founded successively the following cities, upon the borders of the sea. Caricum-Teichos, Gytte, Acra, Melitta and Arambe, and continuing our route, we arrived at the great river Lixus, which flows from Libya. The Lixite shepherds pastured their flocks on the borders of this river. We sojourned here some time, and concluded with them a treaty of amity. Beyond these people dwell Ethiopian savages, in a country filled with wild beasts, and having high mountains, whence, as they say, the Lixus takes its rise. They added, that these mountains were inhabited by the Troglodytes, a race of extraordinary men, who surpassed the swiftness of horses in the race. Having taken interpreters from the Lixites, we stretched for two days along a desert shore extending to the south. Then turning towards the east, during a day's sail, we found at the bottom of a gulf a little island of five stadia in circumference, which we called Cerné, and in which we established a colony. At Cerné we examined the route which we had passed since our departure, and reducing it to a straight line, we inferred that this island was opposite to Carthage, as it regards the columns; for our course from Carthage to the columns, and from the columns to Cerné, was equal. From Cerné, having crossed the mouth of a large river named Chretes, we entered a bay, in which we found three islands larger than that of

Cerné. We were unable to gain the bottom of this bay, without a day's sailing. Here it was overlooked by high mountains, inhabited by savages clad in the skins of wild beasts. They attacked us with stones, and compelled us to retire. At length we entered another river, deep, wide, and full of crocodiles and hippopotami. From thence we returned to Cerné, and from Cerné, resuming our course to the south, we sailed for twelve days along a coast inhabited by Ethiopians. They appeared to avoid us, flying at our approach. The language of these people was not understood by our interpreters, the Lixites. On the twelfth day, we approached some large mountains covered with odoriferous trees, and of divers colours. After having sailed two days further, we found ourselves in an immense gulf, surrounded by a plain. During the night, we beheld the light of many fires, some large and others small, glowing on all sides. We replenished our water at this place, and followed the shores of the gulf for five days. Continuing our course, we gained another great bay, named by our interpreters, the Western Horn. This gulf inclosed an island, and that island a lake of salt water, in which there is another island. During the day we beheld only the solitary forests, but during the night we saw many fires, and heard the sound of flutes, the noise of cymbals and drums, mingled with frightful cries. We were terrified by these, and our diviners commanded us to depart quickly from this island. We continued to sail along a burning and odoriferous coast, whence glowing torrents hastened to the sea. The sun on this shore was so scorching, that our feet were unable to bear the heat. We therefore hastened away; and during four days that we held the sea, the earth appeared to us to be covered with flames every night. Amidst these fires arose one much larger than the others; it seemed to reach the skies; but, in the morning, we perceived only a high mountain, called *Theon Ochema*, the chariot of the Gods. After having passed these torrents of fire, by a navigation of three days, we reached a bay called the Southern Horn. At the bottom of this gulf was an island similar to that of the preceding one; it had also a lake, in which was another island, inhabited by savages: the women here were more numerous than the men, and had their bodies covered with hair, and were called by our interpreters *Gorilles*. We were unable to take any of the men, who fled across the precipices, and defended themselves with stones. We captured, however, three women; but, having broken their bonds, they bit and scratched us with such fury, that we killed them, and having flayed them, we bore their skins to Carthage. The want of provisions prevented us from navigating further.

## Note B, Vol. I. page 15.

IN support of the Norman discovery of Vinland, Malte Brun cites the following authorities :

Snorro Hist. Reg. Sept. cap. 104. 110. Hauk's Bok ou Annals, d'Islande par Hauk, descendant, d'un premier navigateur au Vinland. Il ecrivit vers l'an 1300. Mss cités dans les ouvrages suivans. Torfæi historia Vinlandiæ Antiquæ Hafniæ, 1705. Jonas Arngrim histor. Island, c. 9, 18. &c. Suhm sur les navigations des Norwegians du tems de Paganism, dans les Memoires de la Societé de Copenhagen, VIII. 80. 84. Comp. Celsius dissert. de itin. in Americam. Upsal, 1723. Kalni de, clin. prisc. Scandin. in Americam. Abo 1757.

Forster, who gives full credit to the discovery of Vinland, extracts his story from the Chronicle of Snorro, who was born in 1179, and wrote in 1215, two centuries after this discovery is said to have been made. His facts, he says, have been collected from a great number of Icelandic manuscripts, and transmitted to us by Thormond Thorpeous, in his two works entitled, *Veteris Groenlandiæ Descriptio*. Hafniæ, 1706; and *Historia Vinlandiæ Antiquæ*. Hafniæ, 1705. Mr. Washington Irving, who has made Columbus his hero, is sceptical upon this subject, but admits that "there is no great improbability that such enterprizing and roving voyagers as the Scandinavians may have wandered to the northern shores of America, about the coast of Labrador, or the shores of Newfoundland, and if the Icelandic MSS. said to be of the thirteenth century, can be relied upon as genuine, free from modern interpolations, and correctly quoted, they would appear to prove the fact." See Irving's *Life of Columbus*, 3 vol. App. 296.

If the following account be true, we may assert, that the southern shores of America were known to some of the civilized nations of the Old World, long before the Christian era.

"In the month of December, 1827, a planter discovered, in a field a short distance from Monte Video, a sort of tombstone, upon which strange, and, to him, unknown signs were engraved. He caused this stone, which covered a small excavation formed with masonry, to be raised; and beneath it he found two exceedingly ancient swords, a helmet, and a shield, which had suffered much from rust; and an earthen amphora, of large capacity. The planter caused these, with the tombstone, to be removed to Monte Video, where, in spite of the ravages of time, and the little care taken of the stone, fragments of Greek words could be easily made out, read, and supplied, which, when translated, are to the following purpose: 'During the dominion of Alexander, the son of Philip, king of Macedon, in the 63d Olympiad, Ptolemais.' It was impossible



to decipher the rest. On the handle of one of the swords was the portrait of a man, supposed to be Alexander—on the helmet there is sculptured work that must have been executed by the most exquisite skill, representing Achilles dragging the corpse of Hector round the walls of Troy, (like the bas relief of stucco found in the ruins in the Via Appia at Fraticchio, belonging to the princes of Colonna, which describes all the principal scenes in the Iliad and Odyssey). It is quite clear, from the discovery of this kind of monumental altar, that a contemporary of Aristotle has dug up the soil of Brazil and La Plata. It is conjectured, that this Ptolemaios was the commander of Alexander's fleet, which is supposed to have been overtaken by a storm in the Great Ocean, as the ancients called it, and driven off the coast of Brazil, where it erected the above-mentioned monument, to preserve the memory of the voyage to so distant a country. At all events, this discovery furnishes a fact deserving the attention of antiquarians.—*From the Journal de Voyages et Archives Geographiques.* 1828.

If this story be not purely fictitious, it is probable that the tomb and arms were of Spanish or Portuguese origin, and appertained to some one of the invaders from either nation. The art of "making out, reading, and supplying" ancient inscriptions, is so much the creature of imagination, that faith in its productions must be rare. Were this a Grecian monument, of the period mentioned, ancient history would have conveyed to us some memorial of the voyage which it is supposed it was designed to record. Had the vessels and their crews engaged in this voyage perished on their return, so that no knowledge of their discovery could reach their homes, still some evidence of the inception of their undertaking would have remained to us.

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### Note C, Vol. I. page 45.

ASCENDING from the shores of the Mediterranean into the kingdom of Valencia, towards the lofty plains of La Mancha and the Castiles, we seem to recognize far inland, from the lengthened declivities, the ancient coast of the Peninsula. This curious phenomenon recalls the traditions of the Samothracians, and other historical testimonies, according to which it is supposed, that the irruption of the waters through the Dardanelles, augmenting the basin of the Mediterranean, rent and overflowed the southern part of Europe. If we admit that these traditions owe their origin, not to mere theological reveries, but to the remembrance of some ancient catastrophe, we

see the central elevated plain of Spain resisting the effects of these great inundations, till the draining of the waters, by the straits formed between the pillars of Hercules, brought the Mediterranean progressively to its present level, while lower Egypt emerged above its surface on one side, and the fertile plains of Tarragon, Valencia, and Murcia, on the other. Every thing which relates to the formation of this sea,\* which has had so powerful an influence on the first civilization of mankind, is highly interesting. We might suppose that Spain, forming a promontory amidst the waves, was indebted for its preservation to the height of its land; but, in order to give weight to these systematic ideas, we must clear up the doubts that have arisen respecting the rupture of so many transverse dykes; we must discuss the probability of the Mediterranean having been formerly divided into several separate basins, of which Sicily and the Isle of Crete appear to mark the ancient limits. We will not here risk the solution of these problems, but will satisfy ourselves in fixing the attention on the striking contrast, in the configuration of the land in the eastern and western extremities of Europe. Between the Baltic and the Black Sea, the ground is at present scarce fifty toises above the level of the ocean, while the plain of La Mancha, if placed between the sources of the Niemen and Borysthenes, would figure as a group of mountains of considerable height. If the causes which may have changed the surface of our planet, be an interesting speculation, investigations of the phenomena, such as they offer themselves to the measures and observations of the naturalist, lead to a far greater certainty.—*Humboldt's Personal Narrative*, 1 vol. page 20.

\* Diod. Sicul. lib. 4. c. 18. Lib. 5. c. 47. Dionys. Halicarn. lib. 1. c. 61. Aristot. Meteorolog. lib. 1. c. 14. t. 1. H. Strabo. Geogr. t. 1. (Tournefort Voyage au Levant, p. 124. Pallas, Voyage en Russie, t. 5. p. 195. Choiseul Gouffier, Voyage Pittoresque, t. II. p. 116. Dureau de la Malle, Geographie Physique de la Mer Noire, p. 157. 196. et. 341. Olivier, Voyage en Perse, t. III. p. 130. Meiners uber die Verschiedenheiten, p. 118. Some of the ancient geographers, such as Eratosthenes and Strabo, believed that the Mediterranean, swelled by the waters of the Euxine, the Palus Meotis, the Caspian Sea, and the lake Aral, had broken the pillars of Hercules; others, such as Pomponius Mela, admitted that the irruption was made by the waters of the ocean. In the first of these hypotheses, the height of the land between the Black Sea and the Baltic, and between the ports of Cete and Bourdeaux, determine the limit, which the accumulation of the waters may have reached before the junction of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, and the ocean, as well on the north of the Dardanelles, as to the east of the strip of land which formerly joined Europe to Mauritania; and of which, in the time of Strabo, certain vestiges remained in the islands of Juno, and the Moon.

## Note D, Vol. I. page 46.

PLATO, in his dialogue entitled *Tymæus*, informs us, that whilst an infant, he heard his grandfather, Critias, who in his youth had been instructed by Solon, the friend of Dropydas, his father, relate the following circumstances: Solon had travelled into Egypt, whence he drew his knowledge and his philosophy. He was favourably received by certain priests of Sais, a city of the Delta, the inhabitants of which believed themselves to have sprung from the Athenians, and had preserved amongst them their lance, their sword, and buckler. One of these priests, versed in science and learned in antiquities, cried out, "Solon! Solon! you Greeks are yet infants;—there is not an old man among you. You are ignorant of that which is passed, not only here, but amongst yourselves. We have preserved the history of eight thousand years written in our sacred books; we are able to mount still higher, and to speak of the most brilliant actions of your fathers, performed nine thousand years since. You have knowledge only of one deluge; but that has been preceded by many others. It is a long time since Athens has subsisted, and that her name has been famous in Egypt."

"Learn, then, that, by resisting a power sprung from the Atlantic Sea, your republic preserved our liberty. This sea was then navigable, and surrounded not far from, and opposite, the strait, which you call in your language the columns of Hercules, an island more vast than Asia and Libya together; between it and the continent there were also some smaller islands. This enormous country was called Atlantis. It was populous and flourishing, governed by powerful kings, who possessed themselves of Libya and Egypt, and of all Europe as far as Tyrénie. They endeavoured to subject all the provinces situated on this side of the pillars of Hercules, and we were all slaves. It was then, that the people of your republic showed themselves superior to all other mortals. You conducted your fleets against the conquerors; your knowledge in the art of war seconded you in this pressing danger; you conquered the enemy, and delivered us from servitude. But a greater evil awaited the Atlantides. In latter times, there happened earthquakes and inundations, by which the Atlantic island was overwhelmed—their warriors, and a continent more vast than Europe and Asia together, disappeared in the space of a night. For this reason, the sea which we find there is no longer navigable, or known to any person, it consisting of slime, occasioned by the submerged earth." In his dialogue entitled *Critias*, Plato resumes this subject, and gives an ac-

count of the population of the country, and of the source from which it was derived. In the partition of the earth amongst the Gods, the isle of Atlantis fell to Neptune, who peopled it, and divided it among his children, of whom Atlas, the eldest, had the greatest share. This king gave his name to the whole country. Never had prince more learning or more wealth, nor transmitted more to his heirs. The island, which was 3000 stadia in length, and 2000 in width, of an oblong form, abounded in every thing. The forests supplied wood for every species of building; the earth nourished all sorts of animals, wild and tame, and terminated at the north in a chain of mountains, which, as well as all those of the country, which Plato calls fertile, fine, healthy, and wonderful, produced all sorts of metals, above all, gold and *oxicalque*, now unknown.

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Note E, Vol. I. page 96.

I HAVE adopted the accounts of the early historians, in relation to the islands first visited by Columbus. M. de Navarette, in his introduction to the "Collection of Spanish Voyages and Discoveries," has endeavoured to show, that the first island visited by Columbus was Turks Island, (San Salvador); the second, the Cayco del Norte, (Conception), and the third, Inagua Chica, (Fernandina); the fourth, Inagua Grande, (Isabella). This new version of Columbus's journal has been ably examined and repudiated by Mr. Irving, in the illustrations to the Life of Columbus, No. XVI. Vol. 4. 229. The views of the early historians are confirmed by a skilful analysis of the journal of the admiral, and a comparison of its descriptions with the actual state of the islands of San Salvador, Conception, &c.

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Note F, Vol. I. page 139.

THE discussions concerning the boundaries between the courts of Madrid and Portugal, have continued during three centuries. They at first touched only upon maritime interests, the possession of islands and coasts; but subsequently extended to the interior of South America. The bull of pope Alexander 6th, May 4th, 1493, is similar in spirit to that less known, issued in 1445, at the instance of prince Henry, in favour of Portugal. The line of demarcation is described confusedly enough, at *centum leucas a qualibet insularum quæ vulgariter, nuncupantur de las Azores y Cabo Verde*. Cardinal Bembo, who, in his classical style, proscribes all new denomi-

nations, simply says, *Gorgonum insulæ*, no doubt (*Pliny*, according to *Xenophon de Lampsaco*, lib. 6. c. 31. *Mela*, lib. 3. c. 9.) the Gorgades, (*domus ut aiunt aliquando Gorgonum*) opposite to the Byssadium Promontarium. The island of St. Anthony is certainly in the meridian of the island of San Michael, but there are 8 deg. of longitude from the meridian of the most western island to the meridian of the most eastern of the Azores. A new bull of the 24th November, 1493, leaves the same doubts; but in the treaty of Tordesillas, (June 7, 1494,) the meridian of the demarcation was carried to 370 leagues, instead of 100, from the Cape Verd Islands. The measure of the league not having been indicated, the *linea divisoria* reaches, according to the different hypotheses, the mouth of the Rio Francisco, or Rio Janeiro, or the meridian of St. Paul, which is still placed 1 deg. to the east of Grand Para. Pope Julian sanctioned the treaty of Tordesillas, by a bull issued January 24, 1506. But the voyages of Magellan, Vincent Yanez Pinzon, Amerigo Vespuccius, and others, 1500—1504, engaged the courts of Madrid and Lisbon to assemble, in 1524, the congress of pilots and cosmographers at the bridge of Rio Caya, between Yelves and Badajoz. The disputes between the two nations respecting the possessions of the Archipelago of India, only were settled by a treaty at Saragossa, the 22d April, 1529, by which the Molucca islands were awarded to Spain; who afterwards ceded them to Portugal for 350,000 ducats, reserving the right to repossess them, when she should return the purchase-money. The union of the two crowns under Philip II. precluded discussion for some time; but from the end of the seventeenth century, the establishment of *La Colonia de San Sacramento* near the mouth of the Rio de la Plata, gave rise to disputes relative to the Brazilian limits. The Spaniards destroyed this settlement. A new congress of cosmographers was assembled at Puente de Caya, in November, 1681, but separated without deciding on any thing. During the reign of Charles II., the Portuguese gained everywhere upon their neighbours in America, on the side of Paraguay, on the banks of the Amazon, and on the Rio Negro. Efforts for settling this *questio vexata* were made in 1754, by an expedition under Don Joseph de Yturiaga, in which Don Joseph Solano was engaged as one of the commissioners, which proved fruitless. A treaty was made at Madrid, January 12, 1750, which designated the limits between Brazil, Buenos Ayres, and Peru, by a ridge of mountains, and the course of the rivers. The convention of 1750 was renewed and confirmed at Madrid, October 11, 1777, but the execution of stipulations made without local knowledge, and founded on



very imperfect maps, was attended with great difficulties. Nothing more was attempted on the side of the Oroonoko and the Rio Negro: the whole attention of the two courts was directed towards the limits of Paraguay, and the banks of the Caqueta, the Rio Blanco, and the Amazon. The Brigadier Don Jose Varela, was sent (1782—1789) to Monte Video; M. de Azara to Paraguay; and M. Requena to Maynas. But, the commission was dissolved by the court of Madrid in 1801, and no definite results have flowed from it.—*A. de Humboldt's Personal Narrative.*

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Note G, Vol. I. page 203.

“THE waters which issue so impetuously from the *Bocas de Dragos* are, 1st, Those of the Atlantic ocean, the currents of which run towards the coast of Guyana, through the Canal del Sur, (between Punta de Mangles of the continent, and Punta Galiota of the island of Trinidad,) west-northwest; 2d, The fresh waters of the *Bochas Chicas* of the Oroonoko, (of the Canos Pedernales and *Manamo grande* joined with that of the great Rio Guarapiche.) It cannot be doubted that the island of Paria formed heretofore an inland basin, when the island of Trinidad was still united on the north to cape Paria, and on the southwest (Punta de Icacos) to the Punto Foleta, situate east of the Boca de Pedernales. Three small rocky islands, partly cultivated with cotton, (*Islas de Monos*, de Huebos, and Chacachacares,) divide the passage, which is three or four leagues broad, (between the northwest cape of the island of Trinidad, near the port of Chaguaramas, and the Punta de la Pena, the eastern extremity of the coast of Paria,) into four small channels; *Boca de Monos*, *B. de Huebos*, *B. de Navios* and *B. Grande*. These mouths, collectively, are called *Bocas de Dragos*. There are some other small islands nearer the eastern coast of Paria, (El Fraile, El Pato, and El Patito,) the existence of which attests the convulsions to which this country has been exposed.”—*Humboldt's Personal Narrative*, Vol. 5.

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Note H, Vol. I. page 206.

THE following note is extracted from the Personal Narrative of A. de Humboldt's Travels in America, Vol. 3. p. 303. Eng. Trans. London.

When Christopher Columbus returned from his third voyage, a vague report was spread throughout Europe, that he



had discovered, by certain movements of the polar star, that the coast of Paria, and the neighbouring sea, were elevated like a vast table-land; that the earth was not perfectly round, but that, (in the western countries,) it had a rising toward the equator; that travellers ascended, in going from Cadiz to the peninsula of Paria; and that, owing to the greater elevation of these lands, Paria had a less burning climate, and a race of men less darkly coloured, than those of Africa. These singular hypotheses are mentioned by all the historians of that time. (Pet. Martyr, *Ocean*, Dec. 1. lib. vii. p. 77. Gomara, *Hist. Gen.* cap. viii. p. 110. Herrera, Dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 12.)

But what observation of the polar star could induce Columbus to adopt such strange ideas? Ferdinand Columbus explains this, in the life of his father, (Churchill's *Collec.* Vol. 2. p. 583.) The admiral had observed in the latitude of the Azores the meridian altitude of the polar star above and below the pole. The difference of these two altitudes was  $5^{\circ}$ , and this gave  $2^{\circ} 30'$  for the distance of the star from the pole; while, by a trigonometric calculation, it ought to have been at that time  $3^{\circ} 24' 30''$ . There was an error, therefore, of  $54'$  minus. Columbus judged of the passage of the star over the meridian, by the position of the great bear. When the wain was east or west, he considered it as indicating the passage of the star over the meridian; but this indication being very uncertain, Columbus was not sure of observing when the polar star was in the meridian; the inferior altitude must have been too great, and the superior too little; and this explains why Columbus found a difference of  $5^{\circ}$  only between the two altitudes.

Under the torrid zone, at about  $7^{\circ}$  or  $8^{\circ}$  of N. Lat., he found the pole-star  $11^{\circ}$  above the horizon, at its superior meridian, and only  $6^{\circ}$  when it was in declination, or at the altitude of the pole, which gave him a polar distance of  $5^{\circ}$ . Here Columbus supposed again, that the pole-star was in the superior meridian, when the wain was in the west; but as he could not perceive the pole-star at its inferior meridian, because it was too low, he observed the altitude when the wain was in the superior meridian, and indicated the declination of the star. The pole-star appeared to him again at the latitude of  $9^{\circ}$ , when the wain was in the inferior meridian, and consequently not visible, because of the small elevation of the pole.

If the constellation did not indicate with precision the passages of the pole star over the meridian, it appears that the indications it gave of the delineations were still less exact; for it is very probable, that Columbus took the altitude of the pole star when it was below the declination and the pole, and there-

fore found too small an altitude, and a polar distance of  $5^{\circ}$ , instead of  $2^{\circ} 30'$ , which he had deduced from his observations in the Azores.

In order to explain so great a difference, he imagined, that the earth had the form, not of a pin-cushion, but a pear; and that mariners ascended prodigiously towards the sky, in going from the Azores to Paria, where the circle described by the pole star must appear very large, because it was seen from a nearer place. "Though I am not," says he, "quite master of my explanation, the star appears in its full orbit at the equator, while the nearer we approach the pole the more this orbit diminishes, because of the obliquity of the sky." All this is not calculated to give us a favourable idea of the astronomical knowledge of Columbus. Is it possible that so great a man had not more rational notions of the distance and apparent motions of the stars? The admiral relates, that while he was at Paria, he had an inflammation in the eyes. Perhaps he observed worse than usual, or entered in his journal the observations of his pilots. Perhaps, too, the son has given a confused account of the ideas of his father. Gomara blames the admiral for having imagined that Paria is nearer the sky than Spain. "The earth," says he, "is round, and not of the figure of a pear." This false opinion of Columbus has maintained its ground to our own days, and makes some unlearned pilots believe, that, from India and Paria to Spain, they descend to come to Europe. P. Martyr also judges the admiral with great severity. "*Quæ de poli varietate refert Colonus, contra omnium astronomorum sententiam prolata videntur.*"

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### Note I, Vol. II. page 61.

It has been the fortune of Amerigo Vespucci, to have his name given to the northern and southern continents of the New World. An honour which he certainly could not have anticipated, and which has grown out of a fraud on his part, or, more probably, from the mistake of some editor of an account which he wrote of his voyage.

Amerigo Vespucci was born in Florence, March 9th, 1451, of a noble, but not wealthy family; and received an excellent education under his uncle, G. Antonio Vespucci, a learned friar of the fraternity of San Marco, who was the instructor of several illustrious persons of that period. He entered into commerce, and visited Spain in the service of the family of Medici, somewhere about the time of Columbus's return from his first voyage. One of his biographers has erroneously stated, that he accompanied the admiral in his second voyage, (*Canova*). Another writer (Sebas-

tian Munster) says he was the companion of the first. But he has not himself alleged his presence in either.

In 1496, he was the agent of the house of Juanoto Berardi, a rich Florentine merchant, resident in Seville, who had contracted to furnish the Spanish sovereigns with several armaments, for the service of the newly discovered countries. During this agency, he became acquainted with Columbus, and imbibed from him the passion for discovery, which he first indulged in 1499, in company with Alonzo de Ojeda. Their squadron visited Paria, and ran several hundred miles along its coast, ascertaining it to be Terra Firma. After his return, he, on the 18th July, 1500, wrote an account of his voyage to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medici, of Florence, which remained concealed in manuscript until published by Bandini, in 1745. In this letter, he names no one as concerned with him in the enterprize. In May, 1501, he sailed in the service of Emanuel, king of Portugal, and visited the coast of Brazil. He wrote an account of this voyage also, to the same person, which was first published in 1789. (Bartolozzi. *Recherche Historique.*) And in 1504, he addressed to him a more extended account of the Brazil voyage, which was soon afterwards printed, and widely circulated.

In May, 1503, he sailed in the Portuguese service, as captain of a caravel, in a squadron of six vessels, commanded by Gonzalo Coelho, destined for the Moluccas. Their course from Sierra Leone was directed to the southwest. Three degrees south of the line, he lost his vessel upon an uninhabited island. Whilst the other vessels were employed in rendering assistance to the wreck, Vespucci was dispatched to seek a safe harbour in the island. He found one, but waited in vain for several days for the other ships. Standing out to sea, he met with a single vessel, and learned that the ship of Coelho had sunk, and that the rest had proceeded on their voyage. In company with this vessel he stood for the Brazils, according to a command of the king, in case any vessel should be parted from the fleet. He discovered the bay of All Saints, ran two hundred and sixty leagues further south, where he built a fort, in which he left a garrison of twenty-four men. He returned to Lisbon in June, 1504.

He soon after sought employment in Spain, and he visited the court of Ferdinand in 1505, as an agent on the part of Columbus. He was engaged, together with Pinzon, to command an expedition to be sent out in the spice-trade. But this having been abandoned, in 1508 he was appointed principal pilot, an office in which his chief duties were to prepare charts, examine pilots, superintend the fitting out of expeditions, &c. In the exercise of this office he died, on the 22d February, 1512.

Shortly after his return from his last voyage to Brazil, he addressed a letter, dated 4th September, 1504, to René, duke of Lorraine, who assumed the title of king of Sicily and Jerusalem, containing a spirited narrative of *four* voyages, which he asserts he made to the New World. He has been considered as the first discoverer of the continent of America, by reason of his visit to Brazil and to Paria; and as such, his name was first given to the coast of Brazil. A duplicate of this letter was sent to Pierre

Soderini, afterwards Gonfalonier, of Florence; but it was not published until 1510. The claim made for him as the first discoverer of Brazil, is directly opposed to the fact, that that country was visited and taken possession of for Spain, in 1500, by Pinzon; and also in the same year by Cabral, on the part of Portugal. He describes two voyages to Paria; one in 1497, the other in 1499; occupying eighteen months. The first is the great point in controversy. In favour of it stands the isolated statement of Vespucci; against it, there is an overwhelming mass of unimpeachable evidence. 1. In his letter to Lorenzo de Medici, describing the voyage of 1499, there is no allusion whatever to a prior one. 2. No record of such a voyage has been found, after due search in the naval archives of Spain. 3. At the time he says he made this voyage, he had not been naturalized in Spain, without which he could not have obtained the command of which he speaks. 4. The right of Columbus as the first discoverer of Paria was rigidly investigated in 1508, on the application of his son, Don Diego, for the government under the capitulations with the sovereigns; and not only was conclusive proof given of the priority of the admiral's visit, but no claim was set up for Vespucci, then resident in Seville, by himself, or by any for him. His account, therefore, of the voyage in 1497, appears to have been fabricated, (with what view it is difficult to conjecture,) by taking and altering a number of the incidents from the voyage which he really made with Ojeda, in 1499. In support of this charge, various coincidences have been pointed out between the alleged voyage of 1497, and that described in his first letter to Lorenzo Medici, as having been made in 1499.

But no plausible motive has been assigned for this gross deception. He could not expect to gain thereby the repute of having first discovered the continent, since, at the time the account was written, it was universally believed that Columbus had discovered the main land in his first voyage; Cuba being considered the extremity of the continent. He did not himself give his name to any country. This was originally proposed by the editor of his letter to king René, published at St. Diez, in Lorraine, in 1507, who suggests, that the fourth part of the world should be called *Amerigo*, or *America*, after Vespucci, whom he ignorantly imagined its discoverer. He could not have been excited by ill-will towards Columbus, for he was on terms of amity with him at the time of his death: nor was the deception designed to injure his heirs, since no use was attempted to be made of it. Under these circumstances it has been questioned, whether Vespucci ever designed or committed the fraud. It is supposed, that the objectionable part of his narrative is the result of the ignorance or knavery of its editors. Against this view of the subject, there appears some serious obstacles, among which we may mention, that the letter to king René, and the duplicate to Soderini, have the same form and statement; and that both were published during the life-time of Vespucci, without contradiction or comment.

The name of America was at first given to a small portion of the continent. It covered the remainder as discovery progressed,

until at length it is borne as the *nomen generalissimum* of the New World.

See, for further information on the subject of this note, 4th vol. Irving's Columbus, note Amerigo Vespucci, from which I have taken the chief part of the foregoing; and the North American Review for April, 1821, article *Amerigo Vespucci*. The reviewers maintain the integrity of Vespuccius, and the probability of the voyage alleged to have been made by him in 1497.

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### Note K, Vol. II. page 38.

THIS was probably the Mauritia-palm, of which M. de Humboldt speaks, when treating of the marshes of the Oronoco. "This is the Sago-tree of the country: it yields the flour of which the Yurama-bread is made; and, far from being a *palm-tree* of the shore, like the *chamærops humilis*, the common cocoa-tree, and the *lodoicea* of Commerson, is found as a *palm-tree* of the marshes, as far as the sources of the Oroonoko. In the seasons of inundations, these clumps of Mauritia, with their leaves in form of a fan, have the appearance of a forest rising from the bosom of the waters. The navigator, in proceeding along the channels of the *delta* of the Oroonoko at night, sees with surprise the summit of the palm-trees illumined by large fires. These are the habitations of the Guaraons, (Tivitivas and Waraweties of Raleigh,) which are suspended from the trunks of trees. These tribes hang up mats in the air, which they fill with earth, and kindle, on a layer of moist clay, the fire necessary for their household wants. They have owed their liberty and their political independence, for ages, to the quaking and swampy soil, which they pass over in time of drought, and on which they alone know how to walk in security, to their solitude in the *delta* of the Oroonoko, to their abode on the trees. This palm, the *tree of life* of the missionaries, not only affords the Guaraons a safe dwelling during the risings of the Oroonoko, but its shelly fruit, its farinaceous pith, its juice abounding in saccharine matter, and the fibres of its petioles, furnish them with food. wine, and thread, proper for making cords and weaving hammocks. These customs of the Indians of the Delta of the Oroonoko, were found formerly in the gulf of Darien, (Uraba,) and in the greater part of the inundated lands between Guarapiche and the mouths of the Amazon. It is curious to observe, in the lowest degree of human civilization, the existence of a whole tribe depending on one single species of palm-tree, similar to those insects which feed on one and the same flower, or on one and the same part of a plant." —Humboldt's *Personal Narrative*, Vol. 5. p. 727.





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